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THE
SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY.
TO THE
MESSIAH.

THE
SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY

TO THE

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MESSIAH:

AN

INQUIRY

WITH A VIEW TO A SATISFACTORY DETERMINATION OF THE
DOCTRINE TAUGHT IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

CONCERNING THE

PERSON OF CHRIST,

INCLUDING

A CAREFUL EXAMINATION OF THE REV. THOMAS BELSHAM'S
CALM INQUIRY, AND OF OTHER UNITARIAN WORKS
ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

~~~~~  
BY JOHN PYE SMITH, D.D.

E

~~~~~  
IN TWO VOLUMES.

~~~~~  
VOL. I.

—————  
LONDON:

PRINTED FOR REST FENNER, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

—————  
1818.

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**S. Curtis, Camberwell Press.**

## PREFACE.

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THIS book has been written with the hope of contributing, in some useful degree, to the assistance of serious inquirers after knowledge and certainty, in relation to one of the most important questions that can engage the mind of man. It pretends to no rivalry with other works on the same subject, ancient or modern; many of which have been, and long will continue to be, of extensive benefit to the Christian cause. In the field of truth there is room for every variety of honest exertion; and the harvest will be sufficient to reward every faithful labourer.

The plan of this treatise is constructed upon that which the author conceives to be the natural process of the human understanding in making

itself thoroughly acquainted with the evidence on any subject of interesting knowledge. If the cautiousness of the proceeding should make it appear occasionally tedious, the reflecting and judicious reader will not estimate it so much by the trouble of the means, as by the value of the result.

To some the following work may appear to contain a larger proportion of philological discussion than they may deem useful or edifying to themselves. Their candour will, however, call to mind that the great object of this attempt is to ascertain by full and conclusive evidence the REAL sense of scripture on the point under investigation: and if they will make the experiment, they will find that the critical part of the work, which is almost entirely confined to the Notes, is so expressed that the unlearned may in general form a rational judgment both of the grounds of each argument, and of the validity of its conclusion. It has been the author's particular en-



deavour to lay before his readers the whole materials for the formation of their own determinations; that, in every case, they may be able to judge for themselves, and may clearly see their way to an inference, before they are called to acquiesce in it. Citations from ancient or foreign authors are always translated, if they required or even admitted of it: and in some cases, for the sake of brevity, a translation alone is given, for the fidelity of which the writer is pledged; but this has been done only where no essential benefit whatsoever could be answered by transcribing the original words.

With some diffidence the writer must acknowledge his decided opinion, that it was his duty to make his own translations of passages from the Holy Scripture. He has done so from no affectation of accuracy or beauty, but solely from a persuasion of important expediency, not to say necessity. This is a controversy in which, more than in most others, a perpetual appeal is, on

both sides, made to the original text of the Bible; with a demand for the closest minuteness of attention, and the severest rigour of scrutiny. On the correct interpretation of that text, every thing depends. If the passages, by the true sense of which the inquiry must be decided, were 'quoted from King James's authorized version, in numerous instances corrections and improvements must have been proposed and vindicated in the notes; and upon those alterations, reasonings material to the argument would often have rested. This tedious proceeding is escaped, and we arrive by a direct course at our object, or at the nearest point to it, by the method which has been adopted; that of translating the passages with the closest fidelity from the original texts, according to the most critically established readings. The reasons of deviating from the common version are, in general, such as will present themselves to the attention of a scholar immediately on his consulting the original; but where those reasons are not obvious, they are briefly assigned

in the notes. In regard to translations from the Hebrew, the author has been anxious to avoid the affixing of meanings to words from conjecture, plausible fancy, or mere analogy: he has rigorously adhered to the literal signification of terms and phrases as evinced by the fixed use of the language and its cognate dialects.

It is conceived, also, that another advantage will accrue from this circumstance; namely, that it will, in some degree, put the English reader into the situation of one who is critically acquainted with the Hebrew and Greek scriptures. With this view the practice has been extended to the passages which are incidentally quoted, as well as to those which form the direct grounds of argument. In every instance, the reader will regard a departure from the terms of the authorized version, as an endeavour to express, with as close a conformity as the difference of languages will permit, the precise sense and the very turn and phrase of the original.

With respect to the position of the notes, some difficulty has been experienced. Their number and length would have made it inconvenient to place them at the foot of their respective pages; and to have relegated them to the end of the volume, would have been removing them too far from their points of reference. A middle course is therefore adopted: the smaller notes are put at the bottom of the pages, and the longer ones are annexed to the chapter or section to which they belong, with the title of *Supplementary Notes*. As, however, it was necessarily left to the printer to make this discrimination, a few instances have occurred in which it has not been made exactly in conformity with the author's ideas. This inconvenience will be guarded against in the second volume.

The author had conceived the intention of pointing out, in the whole course of his work, the agreements or differences between his own positions and arguments, and those of former writers

who have maintained the same general views. But he soon found that this would be almost an endless task, and by no means of utility sufficient to compensate for the loss of time and labour which to execute it fully would have occasioned. Experience also taught him that it was most favourable to the free and satisfactory course of his own thoughts, to derive them, as much as possible, from the proper and original sources, without being either aided or obstructed by the productions of other minds.

A copious Index will be given at the end of the second volume.

The indulgent reader will forgive a few lines of a personal character, which the long delay of the publication of this volume seems to lay the author under the unwelcome obligation of adding. The design of the treatise was conceived, and its plan formed, before the publication of Mr. Belsham's *Calm Inquiry*. When that work appeared, the

writer was urged to draw up a reply to it. It appeared, however, to him that such a reply might be best combined with the execution of his previous design. He does not repent the having acceded to the demands of his friends, but he does indeed regret that he permitted any intimation of the intention to go abroad : for the unexpected and apparently unreasonable delay of the work has not only been unspeakably vexatious to his own feelings, but may have contributed to prejudice the cause. This delay, he must be allowed to protest, has arisen from no perception of insuperable difficulties, from no failure of conviction as to the truth of his argument, or its importance to the cause of pure religion, and from no disinclination to the labour of research and reflection : but it has been occasioned solely by the infelicity of his circumstances. Had he been able to bestow upon this work as many months of unbroken time, as have elapsed of years since it was begun, it would long ago have been completed. But far different has been his condition. To the ordinary duties

of a pastor, performed he too well knows with much imperfection; to those of the theological tutorship in the Academy at Homerton; and to the endless avocations which are the unavoidable lot of a dissenting minister in or near the metropolis, unless he can resolve to shut his heart and to refuse his share of time and toil to the strongest demands of public beneficence and Christian duty:—to these, it has been his lot to have, in addition, a large measure of disabilities and hindrances from private duties and afflictions. These have consumed the fragments of time, and have kept the capacity of exertion constantly filled. These have produced such disappointments of hope, such destruction of hours, such weariness and discouragement of mind, as, notwithstanding the conviction of truth and the obligations of promise, have often induced him to throw aside his work for many weeks and months, and have scarcely allowed any other than short and unfavourable pittance of time for pursuing it. When the will to labour has been most vigorous, the necessary

time has been above the writer's reach: and too often, when the opportunity has been presented, he was labouring under the incapacity of dejection and reluctance.

This delay, far more grievous to the author himself than disappointing to others, has furnished the principal motive for publishing the present volume alone. Its contents, also, are not necessarily connected with the subsequent matter: the scripture testimonies adduced in this volume converge to one point, which, though it will receive additional light from the evidence that is to follow, yet forms, of itself, a clear and independent argument. It was, in some degree, a further reason for the separate publication, that the author might give a pledge of his intention, in dependence on the blessing of God, to complete his design, with the least possible delay, by the INVESTIGATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT EVIDENCE.

But scarcely has he sent the last sheets to the



press when all his other feelings are swallowed up in one keen distress. He had a son, the joy of his heart, and the object of many a delightful though trembling anticipation. When those anticipations were beginning to be realized ; when he was just stepping into the place of an associate and a friend : when his character and attainments were opening to prospects of exquisite gratification ; in the very fulness of life, health, and vigour ; it has pleased the All-wise and Righteous Sovereign to take him from the arms of his agonized parents, by a sudden and overwhelming stroke.—\*

“Non sum ambitiosus in malis, nec augere lacrymarum causas volo : utinamque esset ratio minuendi ! Sed dissimulare qui possum, quid illi gratiæ in vultu, quid jucunditatis in sermone, quos ingenii igniculos, quam præstantiam placidæ mentis ostenderit ?—Tuosne ego, O meæ spes

\* PHILIP HENRY SMITH died, after an acute illness of scarcely four days, July 8, 1818, having lately completed his fourteenth year.

inanes, labentes oculos, tuum fugientem spiritum vidi? Tuum corpus frigidum, exsanguie complexus, animam recipere, auramque communem haurire amplius potui?—”†

But, though the bereaved and sorrowing writer can so justly borrow these lamentations, he cherishes a HOPE which that illustrious mourner never knew.

To the reader who *is not* a father, an apology may be due for obtruding the mention of domestic woe: but, should he not approve, he will view, as, at least, a pardonable weakness, the wish to preserve a painful yet precious remembrance.

\* *Quintilian. Inst. Lib. vi. Proœm.*

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THE  
SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY  
TO THE  
MESSIAH.

~~~~~  
INTRODUCTION.

The duty of acquiring a correct knowledge of revealed truth.—The doctrine of a SAVIOUR the primary truth of revelation.—Importance of the question concerning his Person.—Design of this work.

TO a serious inquirer, whose mind is attentive to evidence and open to reasonable conviction, the proofs of the divine origin of Christianity must appear to involve the notion of its infinite importance. Information given by the Author of all truth and wisdom, could not but wear the characters of his supreme excellence, and would not have been made but for the most solid reason, and in the contemplation of final purposes worthy of his own perfection. It cannot be a matter of indifference, with respect to their accountableness and their moral state, whether the rational creatures of God accept or reject the revelation which

he has given; surrounded as it is with a copiousness and variety of evidence, which grows stronger with age and brighter from scrutiny. So, neither, when we have obtained the result of a diligent and candid research, and have yielded our assent to the general truth of the scriptures, are we at liberty to rest at this point; as if it were not interesting, or at least not obligatory, to acquire just conceptions of the contents of those scriptures, the truths which they discover, and the designs which they propose. In a right knowledge of the one, and a practical enjoyment of the other, lies the possession of true virtue and happiness.

The revelation of heaven bears on its front, as its PRIMARY and CAPITAL TRUTH the doctrine of a great DELIVERER from sin and misery, promised under one dispensation and given under another, and it represents him as the Founder of our faith, the Light of the world, the Lord of glory, the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. "Who, then, is He, that we may believe on him?" Can the question be frivolous or unnecessary? Rather, can we be acquitted of a criminal and insulting indifference, if we neglect to propose and pursue the inquiry, till we arrive at a rational satisfaction? Is not a "belief of the truth" constantly represented in the scriptures as

actually necessary to salvation? Is not **THIS** subject evidently a prime and capital part of that truth? Is it not, in the highest degree, probable that the reception of this branch of the truth has a necessary association with such a state of mind as is indispensable to the enjoyment of the blessings which that Great Deliverer came to bestow?

On this subject, as is too well known, a considerable diversity of opinion has subsisted for many ages: and, at the present period, this diversity forms, unquestionably, the most momentous controversy among Christians. It is not less obvious that this circumstance increases the difficulty, as well as the interest, of the investigation. Yet the subject does not lie among the metaphysics of religion, the more abstruse and less vital parts of revealed doctrine. It touches all the springs of life and action in our faith and our practice. It is not a topic whose interest is confined to the men of learned retirement and deep theological research: but it, at this moment, engages, as it ought to engage, the most serious attention of thousands in the middle and the inferior classes; persons who, though usually called unlearned, are not ignorant or uncultivated, but addicted to useful reading in their own tongue, and

above all to the study of the scriptures, to reflecting habits, and to devotion. "To the poor the gospel is preached:" and to the judgment of the poor and Christians of every class, the controversy concerning the *person of* CHRIST is daily submitted, in pamphlets, periodical magazines, and more elaborate treatises, in sermons from the pulpit, and in the conversation of private life. The public teachers of Christianity, of every form and denomination, are under peculiar obligations, to understand well this topic and those most closely connected with it; and to have, from solid conviction, a decided sentiment upon it, satisfactory to their own minds, and honestly avowed to others. The conscientious minister of religion feels this obligation, and acts upon it: those who are rash and comparatively ignorant adopt ready conclusions, which have cost them little, and which, if in fact right, are to these persons prejudices rather than principles: and even the perfunctory and indolent can with difficulty evade the demand upon their reluctant attention.

Many works, of various character and merit, have been published upon this truly important subject. Of these not a few are entitled to all the commendations which are due to ability and

learning, to sound judgment, fair reasoning, and Christian temper.* It must, however, be acknowledged that the generality of the earlier works, valuable and useful as on many accounts they are, were constructed upon a state of the controversy in a considerable degree different from that which it has more lately assumed. Others take up a limited view of the subject, and decline the investigation of some points which are necessary to a correct understanding of the case. Some have sacrificed their utility to their jealousies ; and, by the accumulation of weak or dubious arguments, have obscured and enfeebled their better matter ; others have sought a miserable assistance from harsh and irritating language, crying down rather than answering their opponents ; some have assumed principles hostile to the right of free inquiry, personal judgment, and unrestrained profession of what is apprehended to be truth ; some have rested their arguments on the authority and prescriptions of men ; and, to the injury of a good cause and the deep grief of many conscientious friends of that cause, the authors of some other works have betrayed their chagrin that the justice of the British legislature has denied to their reason-

* Among such works a high place is due to the *Rev. Ralph Wardlaw's Lectures on the Socinian Controversy*, and his *Reply to the Rev. James Yates's Vindication of Unitarianism*.

ings the support of penal terrors.* In the mean time, the dispute is continued with unquenched ardour; and the claim of victory is made on each side, with apparently equal confidence.

It will not, I trust, be deemed an act of presumption in me, to attempt this service to the cause of scriptural truth. Not merely the common interest which Christians generally feel in a subject of vital concern, but other circumstances in my situation have led me, during several years, to be an observer of the progress of the controversy, and I hope not a superficial or bigotted student of the topics and questions which it includes, or which have a near relation to it. The design of the following work is to present an impartial view of the whole evidence, full but not diffuse, compressed but not obscure or ambiguous: and the manner proposed is that which seems most agree-

* "Is it humanity to stand on the shore and, seeing men in a storm at sea wherein they are ready every moment to be cast away and perish, to storm at them ourselves, or to shoot them to death, or to cast fire into their vessel, because they are in danger of being drowned? Yet no otherwise do we deal with those whom we persecute, because they miss the knowledge of the truth; and, it may be, we raise a worse storm in ourselves, as to our own morals, than they suffer under as to their intellectuals." *Owen on Spiritual Underst.* chap. v.

able to the natural proceeding of the mind in the search after knowledge, a careful induction, rising from the most acknowledged principles, and rendered, as much as possible, unobjectionable at every step. "To the spirit of dictation: to the attempt to uphold the ark of God with unhallowed hands," the writer hopes that "he will strenuously oppose himself;" desiring to be "armed only with the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit of God."*

After some Preliminary Observations, which the nature of the subject and the actual circumstances of the controversy seem to require, it is intended to trace the expectation of a great Deliverer and Author of happiness to mankind, from the earliest intimations upon record, through the successive developements of the divine purpose. In this induction, our object will be to ascertain, by a careful scrutinizing of the evidence as it arises, *what* those *characters* were of which the union in one person, who should in due time be revealed to the world, would constitute him the Saviour expected, the Messiah. This will be one leading part of our inquiry. The other will be founded on the position, the admittance of which denominates a man a Christian as distinguished from a Jew, a heathen, or

* *Monthly Repository of Theology, &c.* (the principal periodical work on Unitarian principles), Oct. 1817, p. 639.

a deist, that *JESUS is the MESSIAH*. Our object, in this part, will be to ascertain, by the same inductive process *what characters* are attributed to Jesus, the acknowledged Messiah or Christ, in those writings which all Christians regard as the repository and rule of their faith. If the conclusions at which we may arrive, by pursuing these separate lines of investigation, should turn out to be at variance with each other, we shall be assured that we have erred at some point of our progress, and it will be necessary to retrace our steps. But if a comparison of the results thus attained by different, and in a great measure independent, processes, should find them to be coincident; we shall have the most satisfactory proof that each line of inquiry has been fairly conducted, and that the general conclusion resting on the whole body of separate yet harmonious evidence, is the verdict of truth.

I implore my candid reader to bring his serious and conscientious exertion to the study of this subject, to seek impartially, to pray fervently, and to avow the result honestly. No mortal has a right to call him to a judicial account for that result; but such account he must assuredly give to "HIM that liveth for ever and ever."

BOOK I.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

CHAP. I.

ON THE EVIDENCE PROPER TO THIS INQUIRY.

The light of nature furnishes no information on the mode of existence of the Supreme Being.—Our entire ignorance of all real essences, and, *à fortiori*, of the essence of the Deity.—No antecedent incredibility in the belief of a plurality in the Divine Unity.—Caution against unfounded assumptions on the subject of this Inquiry.—The Scriptures our only source of information, and sufficient for that purpose.

It has been frequently shewn, that Natural Theology can furnish numerous and complete arguments, by which any man of plain understanding and honest heart may be convinced that a Deity exists, that the universe is his creation, and that he exercises over it a government of moral authority, as well as of supreme intelligence and power. We have no reason, however, to expect, from the unassisted light of nature, even in the most favourable circumstances, any more than general conclusions, well calculated to excite

attention and solicitude, but not capable of satisfying the feelings of religious principle, or the reasonable inquiries of the understanding, however chastised by humble and modest piety. This is eminently the case with regard to our speculations on the *nature* of the Supreme Being. We cannot reasonably doubt of the UNITY of God, in every sense in which unity is a perfection: but to the exact determination of that sense, we are not competent. A manifest unity of intelligence, design, and active power, does not warrant the inference that *unity*, in all respects, without modification, is to be attributed to the Deity. For any thing that we know, or are entitled to presume, there may be a sense of the term *unity*, which implies restriction, and would be incompatible with the possession of all possible perfection.*

What is the *essence* of the Infinite Being? and what is the *mode* of his existence? Every thinking man must soon become sensible, either that the solution of these questions lies above his faculties, or that natural considerations cannot supply the materials for the purpose. All the objects of created nature are known to us only by their properties and accidents. Of their real essences, we can observe nothing in fact; we can conceive nothing in imagination. Yet, that real essences exist, we cannot deny without being entangled in contradiction and manifest absur-

* See Note [A] at the end of this Chapter.

dity. We are equally ignorant of those ever active principles or powers, which, under the agency of the all-presiding Mind, I may venture to denominate the *prima mobilia* of the physical universe. That which we call the attraction of gravitation is, confessedly, but an effect. It forms the dew-drop, and it holds together the planetary systems, through the inconceivable immensity of space: but what is its proximate cause? What is the *nerus* which equally unites contiguous particles, and worlds whose distance from each other, imagination cannot reach? By what mode of operation is a very small number of substances assimilated and evolved, in the admirable variety and perpetual change of organized bodies? Every child knows the fact: but how the fact takes place, true philosophy confesses that she knows not. *

Can it, then, be thought surprising, that the natural powers of man can discover nothing, as to the *essence* and the *mode* of existence of the Infinite and Necessary Being? Rather, would it not be held an unreasonable and incredible pretension, should any affirm that he had made such a discovery? The *infinity* of the Deity is, to us, an inconceivable idea: yet can it be with reason denied? The *mode of knowledge* in the divine mind must differ from all our notions of perception, association, and intelligence; and this

* See Note [B] at the end of this Chapter.

difference arises from its very perfection ; yet this is to us a subject absolutely incomprehensible.*

In applying these analogies to this profound and awful subject, we have a sanction from no mean authority ; an authority which the Christian, at least, will reverentially regard. “ Who hath ascended to the heavens, and hath descended ? Who hath collected the wind in the hollows of his hands ? Who hath bound the waters in a close vestment ? Who hath established all the ends of the earth ? **WHAT IS HIS NAME ?** And **WHAT the NAME of HIS SON ?** For knowest thou ? ” — Prov. xxx. 4.

These remarks have been made with a view to shew that there is *no antecedent incredibility* in the supposition, that the infinite and unknown essence of the Deity *may* comprize a plurality,—not of separate beings,—but of hypostases, subsistences, persons ; or, since many wise and good men deem it safest and most becoming to use no specific term for this ineffable subject,—of distinctions ; always remembering that such distinctions alter not the Unity of the Divine Nature. For any thing that we know, or have a right to assume, this may be one of the *unique* properties of the Divine Essence ; a necessary part of that Sole Perfection which must include every real, every possible excellence ; a circumstance peculiar to the Deity,

* See Note [C] at the end of this Chapter.

and distinguishing the mode of His existence from that of the existence of all dependent beings.

These remarks may not appear superfluous, if it be considered that the *impossibility* of the Trinitarian doctrine is boldly affirmed by its opponents.* Were this position self-evident, or could it be established by proofs,† it would be unnecessary to go into inquiries and arguments to determine what is the doctrine of the holy

* “The doctrine of the Trinity, if it had been found there [in the Scriptures], it would have been impossible for any reasonable man to believe, as it implies a *contradiction*, which no miracles can prove.” *Dr. Priestley’s History of Early Opinions*, vol. i. p. 48.

† The Polish Socinians, and after them the sceptic Bayle, made the strongest charges of contradiction and absolute impossibility against our doctrine. But probably no writer has represented the argument in a manner more perspicuous or striking than Dr. Priestley has done in the section of his *History of Early Opinions* referred to in the preceding note. But it appears to me, that the whole of this boasted argument proceeds on false assumptions: viz. that unity in one respect implies unity in all respects;—that the Deity is to be judged of by the rules and reasonings which are derived from, and are applicable to, finite subjects; thus overlooking the necessary INFINITY of the Divine Nature;—that the term *person* is to be taken in its ordinary acceptation as it is currently used among men, though Trinitarian authors have generally been careful to guard against such a supposition, and to advise their readers that they accept the word as one of expediency, not of strict propriety, and that they use it in a sense entirely *sui generis*;—and that the infinite Deity cannot possess properties under one mode of consideration, different from those which it has under another mode of consideration.

scriptures on the subject. If any portions of those scriptures seemed to countenance it, or even expressly to affirm it, our only task would be to devise some neutralizing, though violent, novelty of interpretation : or we should suspect a corruption in the text : or we should deny the inspiration of the writer : or we should charge upon him fanciful analogies, excessive fondness for types and allegories, being a little off his guard, applying scriptures very improperly, pressing arguments upon others which it may be strongly suspected he was not satisfied with himself, and employing such awkward, ill-judged, and inconclusive reasonings as our superior mastery in logic enables us to look upon with pity and generously to correct :* or, wearied and disgusted with the irksomeness of systematically contriving meanings to terms and phrases so repugnant to the common use of language, and so hard to be believed as the intention of the inartificial writers of the bible, we should quit the ungracious task, and, by one desperate effort, drown our scruples and make shipwreck of our faith in the bottomless gulph of infidelity. Not that I would insinuate Christianity to be untenable by rational evidences, even though its doctrines were impoverished to the last extremity. But whether the state of mind, which I have thus supposed, has not been frequently produced, and produced from the

* All these charges are adduced by Dr. Priestley, under the signatures of Paulinus and Pamphilus, in the *Theological Repository*, which he edited, vols. iii. and iv.

very origin and by the process which I have here sketched, let the observant and impartial judge.

It is probable, however, that this assumption may, in some minds, exist upon honest, though mistaken grounds. If it be imagined that the Trinitarian doctrine maintains that *one* is *three*, and that *three* are *one*, in the same sense and respect; or that there are three Supreme Beings; it must be admitted that the propositions are contradictory, and that no well-constituted human mind, which understands the terms, can receive such propositions. The first duty of the inquirer is to free himself from all prejudiced views of the point to be investigated: and, certainly, that must be a prejudice, and a very inexcusable prejudice, which opposes a sentiment under conceptions of it essentially different from the constant declarations of its most enlightened advocates. Can any person be so dull as not to perceive, or so disingenuous as not to acknowledge, the difference between the belief of *three gods*, and the sentiment that the DEITY, strenuously maintained to be ONE BEING, should, as one of the peculiarities of his transcendent greatness and excellence, possess a three-fold manner of existence? Or can it be rationally regarded as any just objection to such a sentiment, that human conception and language are confessedly inadequate to comprehend, or to describe it?*

* "The dispositions of mankind lean toward those who flatter their reason, and endeavour to reduce all things to her compre-

Perhaps, enough has been advanced to open our way to the conclusion, that this great question must be decided by **THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURES ALONE**, elicited by the acknowledged methods of rational interpretation.

On the admission, that the books held sacred by Jews and Christians are clearly proved, to the exclusion of all other pretensions, to contain a real revelation, communicated by God to men; one of the first expectations which the mind almost necessarily forms, with regard to the contents and matter of the revelation, is that it will inform us concerning **GOD HIMSELF**, so much as our capacity can receive, and as may promote our dutious concurrence with the designs of his wise and holy government. *Some* knowledge of his essential nature, as well as of his moral attributes, may be necessary for this purpose; and if he has, in fact, communicated such knowledge, we do not need, nor can we have, any higher evidence that this is the case. Let us hear this voice of truth.

“Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to completion? Lo! these are the outlines of his ways, and the mere whisper we can hear of him; but the thunder of

hension, or to those who abet that pride with which she is desirous of rejecting whatsoever she cannot comprehend. From this principle it is, that they who familiarly illustrate the most unfamiliar difficulties, or flatly deny the existence of that which transcends the faculties of man, are heard with partial ears.”
Dr. Burgh's Reply to Mr. Lindsey's Apol. vol. i. p. 6. York, 1775.

his power, O who can understand? Jehovah, our God [Elohim], is one Jehovah. God is a spirit : the king of eternity, incorruptible, invisible, the only God. God [Elohim] said unto Moses, I AM THAT WHICH I AM.*

These passages are cited here to verify the general idea, that from the devotional, diligent, and reverential study of the scriptures, we may humbly expect to learn so much concerning the nature, as well as the perfections of God, as is necessary for the purposes of practical usefulness ; while the heights of this knowledge are infinitely above our means to acquire, or our capacity to apprehend,

If it be established, that *revelation* from heaven is the only source of evidence, and the inspired scriptures the safe and only medium of proof, in this inquiry ; and if it is admitted that no prejudication of the sense of scripture can be sustained to bar our research, or to dictate our conclusions ; we have advanced one step in our course. The next will be to consider the means of eliciting the genuine meaning and intent of the divine oracles.

* Job xi. 7. xxvi. 14. Mr, Good's Transl. Deut. vi. 4. Joh. iv. 24. 1 Tim. i. 17. Ex. iii. 14. Whether the use of the plural noun אֱלֹהִים, *Elohim*, was designed to intimate a plurality in the Deity, will be considered hereafter.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

CHAP. I.

Note [A] page 2.

“ Whatsoever simplicity the ever blessed God hath by any express revelation claimed to himself, or can by evident and irrefragable reason be demonstrated to belong to him, as a perfection; we ought, humbly and with all possible reverence and adoration, to ascribe to him. But such simplicity as he hath not claimed; such as is arbitrarily ascribed to him by over-bold and adventurous intruders into the deep and most profound arcana of the divine nature; such as can never be proved to belong to him, or to be any real perfection; such as would prove an imperfection and a blemish, would render the divine nature less intelligible, more impossible to be so far conceived as is requisite; such as would discompose and disturb our minds, confound our conceptions, make our apprehension of his other known perfections less distinct or inconsistent, render him less adorable, or less an object of religion; or such as is manifestly unreconcilable with his plain affirmations concerning himself; we ought not to impose it upon ourselves, or be so far imposed upon, as to ascribe to him *such* simplicity.”—*Howe's Calm and Sober Enquiry*, § ii. p. 10.

Note [B] page 3.

“ Bodies act upon each other by different forces. These forces are known to us only by some of their effects. The naturalist observes those effects, and the mathematician calcu-

lates them: but neither the one nor the other knows the least in the world of the *causes* which produce them.

“ The naturalist observes around him an infinite number of cases of motion: he knows the general laws of motion; he knows also the special laws which modify the motions of some particular bodies. Upon the foundations of these laws the mathematician erects theories which embrace all motions, from those of the *moleculæ* of air or light, to those of Saturn and his moons. But neither the naturalist nor the mathematician knows the least in the world *what motion* is in itself.

“ It is beyond a doubt, that magnetism, electricity, and the matter of heat belong to the class of extremely subtile fluids; a crowd of facts assure us of the existence of these fluids, and discover to us their laws; a multitude of experiments display to us their diversified agency and operation: and yet, what do we know of their *internal nature*? Nothing at all.

“ We know that bodies are formed of elements, or primitive particles; we also know that there are different orders of elements; and finally we know, by inference at least, that from the nature, arrangement, or combination of those elementary substances, result the different compounds whose names swell our pompous catalogues: but, what do we know of the inward nature of those elements, of their arrangement, or their combinations? Nothing at all.”—*Œuvres de Charles Bonnet, Neuchâtel, 1783, tome vii. p. 334.*

Note [C] page 4.

Θεὸν μὲν νοῆσαι χαλεπὸν, φράσαι δὲ ἀδύνατον. — ὃ ἐξεπεῖν οὐ δυνατόν, τοῦτό ἐστὶν ὁ Θεός. “ To conceive of God is difficult, to express him impossible:—God is that which it is not possible to utter.” *Mercurius, ap. Stobæi Eclogas, lxxviii. ed. Gesneri, p. 466.* “ What man is there, who hath at all reflected on the narrow limits of the human understanding, and hath in the least studied nature, but hath had occasion to remark that we are assured, from experience, of the existence of a great number of facts which are contrary to our speculations? If we would examine the doubtful principles upon which we pretend

to decide on the credibility of things, we should easily perceive how little the objections, which are suggested to us by the feeble lights by which we are directed in our researches, should hinder us from believing that which is marked with the impression of truth. In material objects, we are daily obliged to confess, that what appeared to us as contradictory, is however true, and necessarily so; with how much more reason then may we apply this observation to things which are spiritual? It is from experience, or from the conformity of a great number of events, that we ordinarily deduce the measure of possibility, or the rules by which to form our judgment; these are confined within certain limitations, beyond which we cannot penetrate. Who can comprehend, for example, a Being who hath existed from all eternity, and who is without beginning? Yet the enemies of revelation confess the necessity of such a Being; demonstrative evidence forces from them the confession. Is not this acknowledging, that a thing really exists, which, however, is repugnant to all our conceptions? And are not the divisibility of bodies, and their motions, amongst those 'things which are incomprehensible? The last is proved by the evidence of the senses; but yet the understanding forms no clear idea of it: the first is admitted from the proofs of reason, though it has all the appearance of impossibility. This instance hath been often proposed; it is not the less true, because of its application to our subject." *Haller's* (the great naturalist, poet, and universal scholar, the prodigy and glory of Switzerland;—see Coxe's *Travels in that country*) *Letters to his Daughter*, Eng. transl. p. 52—54. "If God were not incomprehensible he would be no God.—Incomprehensibility is only in reference to human apprehension, and implies nothing contrary to the grounds of our belief. The human mind must admit the truth of many things which are above our comprehension." *Vince's Discourses on the Laws, &c, of the Heavently Bodies*, p. 62.

CHAP. II.

ON THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

The Scriptures are much occupied with this subject.—To ascertain their import, not insuperably difficult.—On the style and peculiar phrasology of the Scriptures.—Admirably adapted for their purpose.—Their testimony often nullified by mistaken notions of their manner of expression.—Source of those notions, and their dangerous influence.

OUR faith, if it be a “belief of THE TRUTH,” must be “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.” Their writings are “the testimony of God,” “the truth, to resist which” would prove us to be “men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith :”* and, as we must seek an answer to our present inquiry, from no other than this source of knowledge, so we find, that these “Holy Scriptures, given by inspiration of God,”† *professedly* make it their PRINCIPAL object to announce, to describe, and to honour the Saviour. “Moses, the prophets, and the authors of the psalms,” (denoting by a known Jewish phrase, all the inspired writers of the Old Testament), testified and wrote concerning him. “The tes-

* 2 Thess. ii. 13. Eph. ii. 20. 1 Cor. ii. 1. 2 Tim. iii. 8.

† See Note [A] at the end of this Chapter.

timony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. To him give all the prophets witness. The Spirit of Christ in them testified before of the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow." We have, also, "the word of prophecy more confirmed" by those who had been "the eye-witnesses and attendants of the WORD; who saw, and bore witness, and declared unto us, that ETERNAL LIFE, which was with the FATHER, and was manifested unto us;" who uttered these great "things, not in expressions taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the SPIRIT;"* and of whose competency, veracity, and unerring inspiration, we have the fullest proofs.

If, then, we can acquire a satisfactory knowledge of the *true* and *genuine* import of this scriptural testimony, we shall be at no loss to answer the question once proposed by the most revered authority, "What think ye of the Christ?"

And is it difficult to make this acquisition? Is a point, of all others the most momentous, in its connections and consequences, to our religious interests, and our dearest hopes, surrounded with obscurity so deep, that none but those who have leisure and learning for conducting a tedious and intricate disquisition, can hope to arrive at

* Luke xxiv. 44. Rev. xix. 10. Acts x. 43. 1 Peter i. 11. 2 Pet. i. 19, according to Markland's interpretation, 1 Joh. i. 2. 1 Cor. ii. 13.

the satisfaction and moral certainty of a divine faith? If we believe, and duly appreciate what the scriptures teach, in terms as plain as they are emphatic and glowing, on “the EXCELLENCY of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord,” can we admit a supposition which seems so repugnant to the most acknowledged truths concerning the wisdom and goodness of God, and the necessity and value of his revelation? “What is true is easy,” said the Spartan lawgiver: and if, in any case of importance, we can rely upon the position, it must certainly be in such as the present. Though the doctrines of revealed religion be sublime “beyond a seraph’s thought,” as their design, their subject, and their Author would lead us to expect; though they involve the everlasting “treasures of wisdom and knowledge, unsearchable riches, and mysteries, which from eternity had been hidden in God;” and though they present inexhaustible materials for the labour and delight of well-directed study;—still, as to the perception of their leading principles and the attainment of their chief design, they must be plain to the simple and honest mind, which seeks divine knowledge with serious attention and a devotional heart.

We need not go back to prove, what every consistent Protestant is tenacious of, that, under the New Testament dispensation, the scriptures are designed for the common use and benefit of all ages and nations. This principle, of necessity,

implies another; that the scriptures are *adapted* for this universal use and understanding; that such is their original perspicuity and force, that they are capable of being conveyed through all diversities of nation, age, and language, with little injury to their beauty, and none to their plainness in all material points.* Unlike the admired writers of heathen antiquity, whose eminence greatly rests on their exquisite and unrivalled diction, the Hebrew prophets and poets owe nothing to the harsh and unpolished language in which they wrote. Their pathos, grandeur, and sublimity, arise entirely from their sentiments: and these may be displayed in almost any language. And, though the writers of the New Testament used the most copious, and flexible, and powerful of tongues, the wisdom of God did not see fit to endow them with Ionic sweetness, or Attic taste. They adopted a cast of expression, simple, indeed, and plain, but which sounded strange and inelegant, and even barbarous, in Grecian ears. Yet this peculiarity, though derived from their national idiom, was better adapted for the instruction of all ages and nations than a more classical style would have been; for it is more in accordance with the phraseology of common life, which has a remarkable similarity in all countries. The less object is rejected, and the greater secured. Beauty is sacrificed to utility: the intransmissible charm of words, to

* See Note [B] at the end of this Chapter.

the strong and clear display of truth, in a manner the least liable to be impaired by the changes of time.*

That the writers of the New Testament, in employing their Hebraized, and, in other respects, peculiar diction, merely did what, without a miracle, they of necessity must have done, is an obvious remark: but it is equally deserving of attention, that this characteristic diction is, from its plainness and its partaking of the cast of common life, well calculated to be universally intelligible. Authors on biblical idioms have, too generally, overlooked this circumstance. They have dwelt so much on the doctrine of Hebraisms as almost to imply that the Christian scriptures are unintelligible throughout, without a farrago of Jewish and other oriental learning. I deny not the utility of such learning: but I wish to establish a correct idea of the nature and extent of its utility, as seldom reaching beyond the explaining of allusions and phrases of *minor* importance; while the great facts and doctrines, the precepts and the promises, of the gospel, are expressed in terms the most plain and the least associated with remote allusions. Whoever has studied the vast collections of Lightfoot, Schoettgenius, and Wetstein, can judge of the truth of this observation. Perhaps, if he would take the trouble to make a list

* "The principal advantages and excellencies of the Greek language, in copiousness and elegance, are little used in the New Testament." *Owen, on Sp. Und.* ib. ch. viii.

of instances in which *doctrinal* elucidations are derived from this source, he would be surprized at their comparative fewness.

A cause of this advantageous peculiarity in the style of the New Testament, under the providence of its great Inspirer, may be found in the state of society, particularly among the Jews, at the time of its composition. All the nations on the coasts of the Mediterranean were in the practice of free and ready intercourse; and the occupations of common life, in the middling and lower orders, had pretty generally settled into a resemblance to the habits of the same orders of the community, in every following period, when the state of advancement in civilization has been about the same point. Persons in such circumstances, when, not from vanity or ambition, but from the honest impulse of conscience and piety, they became authors; would use a style plain and humble, equally distant from the lofty grandeur of a ruder and independent age, and from the fastidious refinement which attends the decay of genius among the educated classes. Such a style, the father of criticism pronounces to be “the clearest.”*

If these observations be founded in truth, they will induce us to suspect the soundness of that system of interpretation, which assumes that the

* Σαφειστάτη μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ἡ ἐκ τῶν κυρίων ὀνομάτων, ἀλλὰ ταπεινή. *Arist. Poetic.* § 37.

New Testament is written in a style of hyperbole, metaphor, and allegory; to such a degree, that, when the critical operator has brought out what he deems the sober sense, the reader of plain understanding and simple piety is astonished at a result so diminutive, and so disproportionate to the general use and purpose of words.

Such a principle of interpretation, however, will not strongly recommend itself to those who regard "the words of the Lord as pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." As little will it seem compatible with the testimony of the apostle Paul, to whom, more than any other writer of the New Testament, these extravagancies have been imputed, by some modern divines. When the greatness of the truths he uttered brought on him the charge of raving, he protested that he spoke "the words of truth and soberness." He admitted that he was (*ιδιῶτης τῷ λόγῳ*) plain, common, plebeian, or even vulgar, in speech. Having beheld, with unveiled face, the glory of the Lord, he preached not a veiled gospel, he used not the enticing words of man's wisdom.

These observations will not be understood as affirming the humble style of the New Testament to be such as excludes the natural figures of thought, or of diction; or that the noblest elevation, of both sentiment and expression, is not often exhi-

bited in these sacred books. The true sublime could not but arise, from the moment and majesty of the subjects; and the simplest diction is the best vehicle of its expression. But the figurative style of the New Testament is very different from that which has been called the Asiatic style. It has been of unhappy consequence, in relation to the interpretation of scripture, that these have been considered as the same, or nearly similar. "That strong hyperbolical manner," says Dr. Blair, "which we have been long accustomed to call the oriental manner of poetry (because some of the earliest poetical productions came to us from the east), is in truth no more oriental than occidental; it is characteristical of an age rather than of a country; and belongs, in some measure, to all nations at that period which first gives rise to music and to song. Mankind never resemble each other so much, as they do in the beginnings of society. The style of all the most early languages, among nations who are in the first and rude periods of society, is found, without exception, to be full of figures; hyperbolical and picturesque in a high degree. We have a striking instance of this in the American languages; which are known, by the most authentic accounts, to be figurative to excess."* The poetical parts of the Old Testament, especially the prophecies, possess this character: and, after a long interval, it is again discovered in the Koran, and the most ad-

* *Blair's Lectures*, vol. iii. 88, i. 131.

mired Arabic and Persian poets.* But *this is not* the style of the New Testament, if we except the symbolical descriptions of the Apocalypse, evidently deduced from that of the Jewish prophets. The style of the evangelists and apostles is that of plain men, men of serious business, and who had not the leisure, nor the inclination, nor any of the ordinary motives, to practise the arts of rhetoric. If we study their sacred productions, under a persuasion that they are wreathed in flowers, and that their solemn declarations of truth and authority are to undergo a large discount, on the score of hyperbole, metaphor, and allegory, it is more than probable that we shall miss the treasure and embrace a cloud.

An attentive perusal of the Christian scriptures may lead us, also, to observe, that whatever figures do occur, they are either the easy and spontaneous product of pure natural feeling; † or if the marks of design appear, they are manifestly employed, not to recommend the writer, not to dazzle or even to please the reader, but with the honest and unmixed purpose of making truth *more plain* to the understanding, or of impressing

* See Note [C] at the end of this Chapter.

† “ Translationem dico,—quæ quidem cum ita est ab ipsâ nobis concessa naturâ, ut indocti quoque ac non sentientes eâ frequenter utantur.”—“ Such metaphors as, arising from natural feeling, are frequently used by the unlearned, and by those who are not in the least aware of it.” *Quintil. viii. 6.*

it more deeply on the heart ; not to adorn, but to illustrate ; not to confound, but to convince.

Another circumstance of importance, in the figurative diction of the New Testament, relates to the sources from which it is drawn. Our Lord himself generally adverts to the works of nature and the ordinary labours of men : but, in the epistles, it is particularly observable that the materials of allusion, comparison, and metaphor, by which *doctrinal* points are illustrated, are derived almost *exclusively* from the religious observances of the Old Testament ; the constitution and the principal officers of the Israelitic state ; the site and the services of the temple ; the sacrifices and the altar ; the holy place and the mercy seat.

Figures of this kind, above all others, possessed the advantage of a determinate and well known signification. They were parts of a system, originally of divine appointment, and the shadow of good things to come. Their significancy did not depend on the invention of ingenious analogies, but on fixed and solid principles, the design of the whole, and the relation and use of the parts. The principal occurrences, in the dispensations of God towards the Israelites, are declared to have “ happened to them as types.—The law was an instructor leading to Christ.—It was the bringing in of a better hope. The first tabernacle was a

parable for the time then present. Its priests performed their ministry to that which was a copy and shadow of heavenly things. The holy places made with hands, were a type answering to the true ones. The law had a shadow of good things to come." *

These observations will not, I hope, appear irrelevant to those who have remarked the manner in which scriptural evidence is eluded, under the pretence of its being couched in figurative expressions. Under this allegation, often true in itself, those theologians who oppose the Deity and Atonement of Christ, dispose very compendiously of many texts:—as if their being metaphorical, or allusive to the Levitical rites, were a sufficient reason for setting them aside as of little or no significance. This easy method of arguing is generally coupled with a style of censorial remark upon the language itself of the scriptures, not very modest, or much becoming those who acknowledge that the entrance of God's word giveth light, and who receive it with the meekness of reverential acquiescence. The following passages may serve as specimens:—"Undoubtedly Christ spoke thus on purpose, that his words might be understood in different ways, so that wicked men, not sufficiently scrutinizing the words, might have some plausible ground of objection: for it was Christ's usual manner to use such ex-

* 1 Cor. x. 11. Gal. iii. 24. Heb. vii. 19; ix. 9; viii. 5; ix. 24; x. 1.

pressions as would, in some way, entangle wicked men.”* “St. Paul can hardly be considered as entirely free from blame: he hath had too little regard to the consistency of these representations. This proceeding could not but tend to throw confusion into our views of the end and design of the death of Christ.”† “This, I am apprehensive, will appear to be but little satisfactory to any one that wisheth to see Christianity effectually cleared from a charge of licentiousness. At best, it is disappointing his reader, whose expectations he had raised so high by the spirited manner in which he resented the imputation, and begun his answer; by putting him off with a mere allusion, instead of a solid argument. But even the allusion seems to be faulty. It is both arbitrary and defective.”‡ “Whether or no St. Paul’s undoubted good sense was satisfied with it, it answered his purpose the best of any method in the world.”§ “As the Jews boasted much of their priesthood, their sacrifices, and their temple, the writer of this epistle [to the Hebrews] finds a high priest, a sacrifice, and a temple, in the Christian scheme. But, in this, it may be easily

* “Nihil dubitandum est Christum ita locutum esse studio, ut et hoc et illo modo verba ipsius intelligi possent, ut homines improbi verba non considerantes haberent quod speciosè carperent. Hic enim mos Christi fuit, homines improbos suis sermonibus quasi intricare.” *Val. Smalcus contra Frantz.* p. 81, *ap. Calovii Socin. Profl.* p. 86, ed. 1652.

† Dr. Priestley, in *Theol. Rep.* vol. iii. p. 206,

‡ Id. ib. p. 205.

§ Id. ib. p. 199,

supposed, there is room for much imagination in fancying resemblances where the appearances are very slight, so that much stress is not to be laid on arguments of this kind.”* “ This epistle contains many important observations, and many wholesome truths, mingled indeed with some far-fetched analogies and inaccurate reasonings.”† “ The writer of this epistle, having found in Psalm cx. the priesthood of the Messiah compared with that of Melchisedec, strains the similitude to as many points of resemblance as possible.”‡ “ Jesus knowing their mean and secular views, resolved to release himself from these selfish and unworthy attendants; and, for this purpose, he delivers a discourse which they could not comprehend, and the design of which was to shock their prejudices, to disgust their feelings, and to alienate them from his society.”§ Such designs, and such contrivances to accomplish them, the *Calm Inquirer* attributes to the wisest and best, the most benevolent and amiable of teachers! And such bad faith, as well as bad reasoning, do the leaders of the sect not scruple to attach to the greatest of the apostles, a man who, irrespectively of his inspiration; may vie with all history for integrity of character and independence of mind!

The **RADICAL ERROR**, which is latent in these bold declarations, and which appears to me to

* Dr. Priestley's *Notes on Scripture*, vol. iv. p. 451.

† *Impr. Vers. of N. T.* note on Heb. xiii. 25.

‡ *Calm. Inq.* p. 160.

§ *Ib.* p. 57, on Joh. vi.

diffuse its influence through every distinguishing part of the Unitarian system, is the assumption of low and degrading thoughts concerning the BLESSED and HOLY GOD, his moral government, and the revelation of his justice and grace. Let a man, with a candid, pure, and devotional mind, turn from the frigid comments of this school to the glowing energy which warms and illuminates the apostolic pages;—and will he not be compelled to acknowledge that the views and feelings of the scriptural writers, and the dictates of these modern refiners, are irreconcilably contradictory?

It is now submitted to the judgment of the reader, whether the remarks in this chapter have sufficiently established the points already stated; that the style of the New Testament scriptures is well adapted for intelligence and perspicuity, to all ranks of men, in every nation, and in every period of time;—that they are wisely calculated to suffer less in translation than most other writings;—and that their figurative expressions are, in the most important cases, constructed upon a regular principle, the general design of which guides and illustrates the particular instances of its application.

If these views be correct, the application of them will facilitate our proposed inquiries, and will preclude many objections.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

CHAP. II.

Note [A] page 13.

2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.—“That from a child thou hast known the holy writings, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through the faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every writing divinely inspired [is] also profitable for instruction, for conviction [of error], for recovery [to that which is right], for training up in righteousness.” It appears to me impossible to establish, from the Greek text alone, so as to preclude all fair objection, either side of the agitated question, whether *θεόπνευστος* agrees immediately with *πᾶσα γραφή*, or is (as it is translated in the common version and in many others) a part of the predicate. But I apprehend that the scale is turned in favour of the other construction by the evidence of the venerable Syriac Version, whose antiquity is almost, if not quite, apostolic. It reads, “And that, from thy childhood, thou hast known the holy books,”—&c. “for every writing which has been written by the Spirit, is valuable for instruction,” &c. The Vulgate confirms this interpretation:—“*Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata, utilis est ad docendum,*” &c. It is evident that the apostle, in v. 16, resumes distributively what he had before advanced collectively: so that “every writing divinely inspired” is a description by which the apostle designates *each and every one* of the writings comprized under the well-understood collective denomination, *τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα*, *the holy writings*. Timothy, and every contemporary Jew or Christian, needed no explanation of this phrase. They knew it, as

one of the most common terms of usage, to denote the *γραφαί*, *writings*, or *scriptures*, to which the Lord Jesus was in the habit of referring, as to the ultimate divine authority (e. g. Matt. xxii. 29. xxvi. 54. Luke xxiv. 32.), the searching of which he enjoined (John v. 39.), and which it is impossible to suppose, with any shadow of reason, that he did not design to use in the sense in which he knew that all his hearers would understand him; namely, as expressive of the whole sacred canon of the Jews, for to them “were entrusted the oracles of God.” (Rom. iii. 2.) The general tenor of the New Testament most clearly recognizes, under these descriptions, the whole *received* scriptures of the Jewish nation: and, when a particular passage is cited, it is usual to refer to it in the singular number; ἡ γραφή, ἡ γραφή αὐτή, ἑτέρα γραφή, *the writing*, or *scripture*, *this scripture*, *another scripture*, (John xix. 24, 37. Mark xii. 10.)

Thus the passage before us, though we adopt that construction of *θεόπνευστος* which Unitarians generally approve, furnishes the strongest testimony to the *inspiration* of each and every of the books of the Old Testament. The importance of this conclusion, in relation to our present subject and to every other part of the controversy with the Unitarians, needs not to be pointed out.

If, however, any should ask what documents we have to ascertain to us *what* books were acknowledged by the Jews as sacred when these repeated sanctions of Christ and the apostles were given; we answer—

1. That the conservation of the Hebrew scriptures with a perfection and scrupulosity unexampled in any other case, and from a period long anterior to the birth of Christ, is among the most established facts in critical history.

2. That we have the testimony of Josephus, a contemporary of the apostles, no friend to Christianity, and more solicitous than truth and honour would justify to conciliate the favour of a heathen court; a testimony which brings to this topic all the light that could be desired. Having spoken of the prophets as learning what they had to communicate “*by inspiration from God*,” (κατὰ τὴν ἐπίπνοιαν τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ), he says; “There are not among us endless multitudes of books, dissonant and contradictory; but only twenty-two—which are *justly believed to be divine*

(δικαίως θεῖα πεπιστευμένα.)” He distinguishes these as the inspired writings, from books written after the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus ; an era which coincides with the dates of the books of Malachi and Nehemiah, and the history of Esther. He describes them, as “their own scriptures” (τὰ ἴδια γράμματα), the “doctrines of God” (Θεοῦ δόγματα), and “the laws and the writings (ἀναγράφαι) succeeding them.” *Contra Ap.* lib. i. § 7. 8. ed. Hudson. tom. ii. p. 1333. The number which Josephus gives, twenty-two, is made out, if we consider the following books as combined, on obvious and satisfactory grounds : Ruth annexed to Judges ; the two books of Samuel, of Kings, and of Chronicles, as respectively unbroken, and so making three instead of six ; Nehemiah annexed to Ezra ; the twelve minor prophets as one roll or book ; and (which, it must be confessed, does not carry that evidence of affinity which the others do ; ἡ δὲ κρίσις χαλεπή) the Canticles annexed to Ecclesiastes.

Note [B] page 16.

“ If we look for that perspicuity and clearness in the expression of divine revelation, which men endeavour to give unto the declaration of their minds in things natural, by artificial methods and order, and by the application of words and terms invented and disposed of on purpose to accommodate what is spoken unto the common notions and reasonings of men ; we may be mistaken. Nor would it have become divine wisdom and authority to have made use of such methods, ways, or arts. There is that plainness and perspicuity in it which becomes the holy and wise God to make use of, whose words are to be received with reverence, with submission of mind and conscience unto his authority, and fervent prayer that we may understand his mind and do his will. Thus all things are made plain unto the meanest capacity ; yet not so, but that, if the most wise and learned do not see the characters of infinite divine wisdom on things that seem most obvious and most exposed unto vulgar apprehensions, they have no true wisdom in them. In those very fords and appearing shallows of this river of God, where the lamb may wade, the elephant may swim. Every thing in the scripture is so plain as that the meanest believer may understand all that belongs unto

his duty, or is necessary unto his happiness; yet is nothing so plain, but that the wisest of them all have reason to adore the depths and stores of divine wisdom in it." *Owen on Sp. Underst.* ch. xi.

Note [C] page 21.

"Instituenti mihi de Poesi Asiaticâ disserere, prima sese offert Hebræorum poesis, verbis splendida, sententiis magnifica, translationibus elata, compositione admirabilis, origine tandem, quod de nullâ aliâ dici potest, verè divina.—Ea est linguæ Hebrææ cum Arabicâ cognatio, ea poeseos utriusque gentis cum in imaginibus tum in figuris similitudo, ut nequeam mihi persuadere quin metra etiam Hebræa fuerint Arabicis persimilia."—"At the outset of a disquisition on the Asiatic Poetry, that of the Hebrews first presents itself to our regard, brilliant in diction, magnificent in sentiment, sublime in figures, admirable in arrangement, and in its origin possessing the unrivalled dignity of inspiration from God.—Such is the near relationship of the Hebrew tongue to the Arabic, such the resemblance of the poetry of each of those nations, both in the imagery and the kinds of figures which they employ, that"—&c. *Sir William Jones's Commentarii Poeseos Asiat.* in his Works, vol. vi. p. 1, 55.

CHAP. III.

ON THE ERRORS AND FAULTS, WITH RESPECT TO THE PRESENT
CONTROVERSY, WHICH ARE ESPECIALLY CHARGEABLE ON
THE ORTHODOX, BUT IN PART ALSO ON THEIR OPPONENTS.

Arguing from translations.—Inattention to criticism on the original text.—
Inaccurate expressions.—Erroneous notions and incorrect language on the use
of reason in relation to divine subjects.

To understand the scriptures aright, is to understand them in the sense in which they were originally intended. This, all will admit: but, if all were equally happy in the practice of this admission, controversies in religion would be few and trivial. Observation shews that good men, with upright intentions, commit oversights in laying the foundation of their arguments; and impartiality requires that we should point out these faults, and guard ourselves against their influence.

It would seem truly superfluous to express a caution against arguing from any translation of the scriptures as if it were the original. But, it must be confessed that not only unlearned Christians, but some men of respectable education, have fallen into this egregious error. Nor is this

fault chargeable on the orthodox alone: their opponents are not perfectly clear from it.* To mention it, however, must, to every rational man, be sufficient. Respectable and excellent as our common version is, considering the time and circumstances under which it was made, no person will contend that it is incapable of important amendment. A temperate, impartial, and careful revision would be an invaluable benefit to the cause of Christianity; and the very laudable exertions which are now made to circulate the bible, render such a revision, at the present time, a matter of still more pressing necessity.

It is a failing of the same kind, when the text of the common Hebrew and Greek editions is adduced as indubitably and in every case the divine original, without any previous consideration or inquiry. Negligence in this respect on the part of the orthodox writer or preacher, has too often afforded a vantage ground to the Unitarian party, of which they have well known how to avail themselves. Happily, however, this evil is on its decline. The extended attention to classical and biblical learning in our age, and the lustre which has, by universal consent, been conferred upon the labours and the names of not a few distinguished masters in the critical art, have brought the study of verbal criticism, not only to be confessed as important, but to be cultivated

* See Note [A] at the end of this chapter.

as a favourite and elegant occupation. Indeed, we are the rather in danger of falling into the opposite extreme of a fondness for alteration. But guarding against this predilection, as not less uncritical than it is pernicious, every Christian who is moderately informed on these subjects, knows it as an incontrovertible fact, that the early editions of the original scriptures *could not* possess a text so well ascertained as those which the superior means and the diligent industry of modern editors have been enabled to attain; that from these early editions all the established Protestant versions were made; and that an accurate and impartial criticism of the published text, as well as of any translation, must lie at the foundation of all satisfactory deduction of theological doctrines from the words of scripture. If we leave it in the power of a disputant to object to the validity of our witnesses, the controversy must become frivolous and endless. Let the unlearned Christian dismiss every apprehension that the word of God is rendered uncertain, or is treated with irreverence, when a strict and judicious criticism is employed upon its verbal medium of conveyance: such criticism will only display that eternal word in a clearer form, and upon a more solid basis of moral demonstration.

If it be a fault not to have been sufficiently severe in the scrutiny of our evidence and the rejection of that which is untenable, it is even a greater injury to any sentiment to convey it in

terms inappropriate, ill-chosen, liable to misconception, or actually inviting and sanctioning misconception. Of this very serious offence many orthodox writers have been guilty, when they have used language which applies to the divine nature of the Redeemer, the circumstances and properties which could attach only to his humanity.* By this practice they have degraded the truth, violated the authority of scripture,† and afforded a most unhappy occasion to the objections and derisions of their opponents. The imagination of a poet, or the ardour of a popular preacher, can form no apology, can claim no indulgence, for transgressing the limits of “truth and soberness;” even were it not the fact that they, at the same time, were committing the grossest offence against true taste.

But there is a greater fault which deserves no leniency of treatment. In whomsoever it is found,

* It cannot be too much lamented that the excellent Dr. Watts has repeatedly fallen into this fault in his Hymns, some of which wound a thinking and pious mind by language which one could not copy without pain.

† Some have vindicated this practice by the example of Acts xx. 28, “the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Perhaps they are not aware that the reading supported by the most decisive evidence is “church of the Lord.” Such expressions as in 1 Cor. ii. 8, fall under another consideration, namely, that terms descriptive of the Saviour’s complex person and mediatorial character may be joined with predicates which express any of his mediatorial acts, whether emanating immediately from the divine, or from the human nature. See *Dr. Owen on the Person of Christ*, close of chap. xviii.

let us hold it in severe abhorrence. It is the want of just respect to the persons of opponents, and of fair and honest representation of their sentiments and arguments. This delinquency is of no light guilt before man and in the sight of the righteous God. It is at least the offspring of ignorance and prejudice ; and it never fails to inflict deep injury on the cause which has the misfortune to be so defended. “ A servant of the Lord ought not to strive” in angry contention, “ but to be gentle to all, apt to teach, patient of wrong, in meekness instructing the opposers.” * Nothing can justify the misrepresentation of a doctrine, or an argument, or an inference, charged upon those whose opinions we controvert : nor ought we to allow a moment’s countenance to calumnies against character. In acknowledging what is excellent and praiseworthy in an adversary, an honourable and Christian mind will feel a pleasure the greater because he is an adversary. The love of truth as to Christian doctrine cannot be genuine and consistent, if it be not conjoined with the practice of truth in our sentiments and feelings towards our fellow-creatures. If, with regard to any religious errors, it be our serious persuasion that they subvert the very foundations of holiness and hope, and that the unhappy persons who embrace them are in a state of reigning sin, and of unpardoned guilt before God ; the proper concomitant of this distressing conviction will be a tender care that

* 2 Tim. ii. 24.

we put no additional stumbling-block in their way. If, by any want of equity and Christian dispositions, we repel and alienate them still further from THE TRUTH which must be received that men may be saved; * we sin most awfully against God; and have we not reason to expect that "their blood he will require at our hands?" †

Of another serious impropriety it might be doubted whether it is most suitably introduced here or ought to be reserved to the next chapter. Both the orthodox and their adversaries have, in different directions, made themselves chargeable with this fault; but to the former the effect has been beyond comparison the most injurious. It has consisted in a confusion and misapplication, of both ideas and language, on the use of reason in matters of faith. On the one side, assertions have been brought forth about the power and sufficiency of reason, which have scarcely stopped short of impiety; and on the other, the opposite disclaimer has been made, with a vehemence so inconsiderate, as almost to imply the abdication of our mental faculties. The error has, in part at least, arisen from not attending to the different senses of ambiguous words, from not using care to preserve the same acceptation of the same terms through the whole length of an argument, and from a blameable and uncandid readiness to seize upon and exaggerate the inadvertencies of oppo-

* 2 Thess. ii. 13. † See Note [B] at the end of this chapter.

nents. The principal term which has been thus abused, *Reason*, is constantly employed in two very different meanings; not to mention its other senses which belong less to our present consideration. By *reason*, we often intend the employment of our mental faculties in discerning the agreements and differences of things, in comparing premises and their conclusions, in perceiving the weight and appropriation of evidence, and in judging of the application of motives: at other times, we intend the sum of notions, sentiments, or opinions received by any individual, at a given time, as so certainly true that to him they do not appear to require further questioning. The former is the power of thought exercising itself for the discovery of truth: and therefore it would be absurd to say that any position is agreeable to it, or repugnant to it; for, in this acceptance, reason is not a *rule* but a mere instrument. In the latter sense, however, a man commonly says that a given position is *agreeable* to his reason, or *above* it, or *contrary* to it; by which he means, or ought to mean, nothing more than that the new proposition appears to him *compatible* with that collection of previous notions which he is in the habit of regarding as indubitably certain, or that it is quite *out of the range* of his hitherto acquired mental habits, or that it is *irreconcilable* with what he has been accustomed to regard as unquestionable truth. Every one must perceive, that the value of such assertions as these must depend upon the correctness of the mass of sen-

timent which the individual assumes as his standard. If the motion of the earth be asserted to an ignorant peasant, he calls it contrary to reason, and rejects it: for to *his* reason, at the present time, it is indeed contrary, and appears among the grossest of absurdities. On the other hand, a geometrician cannot, in his department of science, fall into irreclaimable error; because the collection of notions held indubitable in his mind, his standard of judgment, or what we may call his geometrical reason, is ultimately no other than a few axioms, known by all men to be necessary truths. Happy would it be, if, in all the exercises of mind, we would faithfully and unremittingly aim at an imitation, *so far as possible*, of the geometrician's provident and inflexible method!

But it is further to be observed that, from this latter signification of the word, another has been derived, by which it is made to stand for a certain collection of received notions which are supposed to be common to mankind; whether they are impressed on the mind by the immediate energy of the Creator, or are an universal case of association, or are the necessary product of circumstances inevitable to men, on the first occurrence of those circumstances to a sound intellect. Whatever opinion we may form of this common reason of mankind, it is evident that it will be more or less perfect according to the progress of society in experience and improvement; and that to each

individual, his share of this common reason coincides and becomes identified with his own particular sum of accredited opinions, only it is corroborated by his belief of an universal participation in the same on the part of his fellow-creatures.

If these observations are just, they will assist us to judge of the propriety or impropriety of some current phrases. A *dictate of reason*, or a *judgment of reason*, would denote, in the first sense, the settled issue of a careful examination; but, in the latter and probably more common acceptation, it would signify that opinion on a given case which a person looks upon as intuitively certain. The *light of reason*, in the first sense, is a phrase without meaning: if it were used in the latter, it would signify merely the whole collection of sentiments which an individual held to be indubitable. "What the eye is to the body," says the excellent Bishop Horne, "*reason or understanding* is to the soul. The eye is framed in such a manner as to be capable of seeing, reason in such a manner as to be capable of knowing. But the eye, though never so good, cannot see without light; reason, though never so perfect, cannot know without instruction. The phrase, therefore, *light of reason*, seems to be an improper one; since reason is not the light, but is an organ for the light of instruction to act upon: and a man may as well take a view of things upon earth, in a dark night, by the light of his own eye, as

pretend to discover the things of heaven, in the night of nature, by the light of his own reason." * I doubt whether, in this valuable paragraph, the author has avoided an inadvertent change in the use of his principal term. He first employs the word *reason* in the first of the senses above stated, to denote the exercise of the intellectual faculty: but the supposed advocate of natural religion might complain that his opinion was not fairly stated. He might protest against the conclusion, and say that he intended his "light of reason" to be taken in the other sense, that of a collection of supposed indubitable notions or first truths.

But it would be easy to adduce instances of grosser inaccuracy. Language like this has been held by some Christians; that "reason must be silent when faith speaks," and that "reason must be submitted, or must even be sacrificed, to faith." A good sense may be put upon such phrases, if, by *reason*, we understand our opinions and deductions formed by our own speculations, and, by *faith*, the dictates of a testimony which has been established by previous proofs to be divine: but, with this explication, the terms are not well chosen. Infidels have been very fond of such language, when, for the worst of purposes, they have written under the affectation of a reverence for revealed religion. If they can lodge in the unwary

* *Bp. Horne's Works*, vol. vi. p. 198.

mind the impression, that man must renounce his rational faculties in order to pay due respect to the truth of God, or that any position is to be held *true* in theology which is *false* in fact; they know well that their work of seduction is all but completed. That great wicked man, of whom it is hard to say whether the brilliance of his wit or the maliciousness of his impiety existed in the higher degree, perpetually avails himself of this sophistry;* and his unhappy disciples have been servile imitators of this, as of his other artifices.

“ Whatever opinion agrees not with reason is inadmissible in divinity.”† “ To admit any doctrines which are contrary to common sense, we neither can nor ought to be induced by the express words of the Spirit of God himself.”‡ “ Whatever the reason of man finds out to be false, is on no account to be considered as true or right in religion.”§ If the authors of these hardy and irre-

* For example: “ We believe by faith, and not by our reason, which we take good care never to listen to; for, when faith speaks, it is well known that reason must not say a word.” *Voltaire, Dictionnaire Philosophique; art. Miracles.*

† Quæ cum ratione non convenit opinio, ea etiam in Theologiâ nullum locum habere potest. *Smalcus contra Frantz. Disp. iv. de Justif.*

‡ Ut ea quæ naturæ refragantur admittamus, ipsius Divini Spiritûs apertis verbis adduci nec possumus nec debemus. *Socini Op. tom. i. p. 784.*

§ Quicquid ratio humana falsum esse reprehendit, id nullo pacto pro vero aut justo in divinis habendum est. *Episcopii Op. tom. ii. pars. ii. p. 449.*

verent declarations had duly considered the meaning of words, it is to be hoped that they would not have uttered expressions which, in their most favourable acceptation as supposing an *impossible* case, are trifling truisms clothed in "great swelling words of vanity;" or, if not thus mitigated, are in terms absurd, and in sentiment most impious.

Is it correct to say, Reason is the *judge* in religious controversies?—Before we could answer this question, we should ask the querist to define his terms: What does he mean by *reason*?—the faculty of discernment and argumentation, or any set of admitted principles already enthroned in the mind? And, how does he use his metaphorical appellation, a *judge*?—does he intend an authoritative power of dictation; or the exercise of the mind in examining, distinguishing, and forming its best conclusion according to the evidence?—I venture to think that the truth of the case might be unexceptionably expressed thus: The faculty of human reason, in its most careful and conscientious employment of proper means and instruments, is appointed by God as the judge, to each individual's own mind, of the validity of evidence in every case; and for this exercise, each individual is judicially accountable to God alone.

But I must own that to me it seems a preferable style of expression, to say of religious truth that

the Judge is God ; that the expression of his judgment, and the rule of ours, is to be sought in the holy scriptures ; and that the best employment and most dignified office of human reason is to be the grateful and docile learner.

All these observations on the use of reason would be applicable to the mental exercises of a sinless angel. Far different are our intellectual circumstances. Is our reason unclouded ? Is it debased by no servitude ? Is it enfeebled by no moral disease ? Is it manacled by no prejudices ?—If, in respect to the intellectual exercises which are far removed from the domain of religion, the father of philosophy saw it necessary to caution us against “ the idols of the cave ;” how much more pressing and solemn must be the necessity of such a guard in disquisitions, with respect to which truth unhappily lies in opposition to some of our strongest passions and feelings, and error is pleasingly congenial with our favourite propensities ! Little must be his self-acquaintance, and superficial his observation of others, who has not perceived how powerful is the control which moral prejudices exert over our reasonings and all our intellectual habits.

This subject will come more directly under attention in a subsequent chapter, on the moral state of the mind and affections with relation to the present inquiry.

But it is with pleasure that I adduce a better citation from one of the authors whose indecorous language has been just reprehended. It would have been well for himself and for his readers, had he sufficiently considered and with consistency applied the truth which he has here admitted. “We readily acknowledge that there are many things in the Christian religion which are above reason, and yet must of necessity be by us believed; because, how much soever they surpass our reason, they are revealed in the scriptures, and are perfectly agreeable to the very reason which they surpass.”* I am not, however, satisfied that in the last clause a dangerous implication does not lurk. If the bottoming motive, the “*ob id ipsum*,” of our faith in a doctrine, be not *only* and *simply* that it is clearly revealed in the scriptures of God, but that it is “perfectly consentaneous with our reason,”—who does not see that the MAJESTY OF DIVINE VERACITY is insulted, and that an entrance is opened for the ambiguities, absurdities, and profaneness which we have protested against. However, the same author very properly adds: “A thing may be above reason and yet be approved by it. Such

* Nos verò ultrò fatemur plurima esse in religione christianâ quæ rationem superent, et tamen nobis necessariò sint credenda, ob id ipsum, quia, quantumvis rationem superent, tamen in sacris literis prodita extent, et rationi nostræ quam superant sint maxime consentanea. *Smalc. contra Frantz. Disp. iii. de Sacram.*

are almost all the doctrines of religion, and more especially of Christianity.”*

No apology is needed for concluding this chapter with a citation from Bishop Stillingfleet, a writer whom few have equalled, and probably none have excelled, in strength and clearness of understanding.

“I shall endeavour to state the due bounds between *Faith* and *Reason*, and thereby to shew that, by those grounds on which we receive the doctrine of the TRINITY, we do not give way to the entertainment of any absurd opinion, nor overthrow the certainty of reason.

“1. We have no difference with them [Unitarians] about the use of our reason as to the certainty of a revelation. For, in this case, we are, as much as they, for searching into the grounds of our faith; for we look on faith as a *reasonable act* of our minds, and if we did not allow this, we must declare ourselves to believe without grounds. And, if we have grounds for our faith, we can express them in words that are intelligible: and, if we can give an account of our faith in an intelligible manner, and with a design to give others

* Potest enim aliquid rationem superare, et tamen eidem applaudere. Quale ferè sunt omnia quæ in religione, præsertim christianâ, continentur. *Smalc. contra Frantz. Disp. iii. de Sacram.*

satisfaction about it, I think this is making use of our reason in matters of faith.

“ 2. We have no difference with them about the use of our reason as to the *true sense* of revelation. We never say that men are bound to believe upon the bare sound of words, without examining the sense of them. We allow all the best and most reasonable ways of attaining to it, by copies, languages, versions, comparing of places, and especially the sense of the Christian church in the best and purest ages, nearest the apostolical times, and expressed in solemn and public acts. . . By these rules of reason we are willing to proceed, and not by any late and uncertain methods of interpreting scripture.

“ 3. We differ not with them about the right use of the *faculties* which God hath given to us, for right understanding such matters as are offered to our assent. For it is to no purpose to require them to believe, who cannot use the faculties which are necessary in order to it.

“ 4. We differ not with them about rejecting some matters proposed to our belief, which are contradictory to the principles of sense and reason. It is no great argument of some men's reason, whatever they pretend, to talk against admitting seeming contradictions in religion. For who can hinder *seeming* contradictions, which arise from

the shallowness of men's capacities, and not from the repugnancy of things. And who can help men's understandings?—But where there is evident proof of a contradiction to the principles of sense and reason, we are very far from owning any such thing to be an article of faith.”*

* *Stillingfleet's Vind. of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, chap. x. *Works*, vol. iii. p. 519.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

C H A P. III.

 Note [A] page 32.

No writer can be more prompt to appeal to the original text than the author of the *Calm Inquiry*; and for this, when reason and truth warrant the appeal, let him be commended. But a case happens in which the error of the authorized version affords a semblance of support to the Unitarian cause: and then he can argue from *the very inaccuracy* of the translation, with as comfortable a confidence as could be felt by the most illiterate of those lay-preachers, upon whom, on another occasion, he has poured unsparing contempt. (See *A Letter to Lord Sidmouth, by the Rev. Thomas Belsham*: 1811.) This case is one in which, with a view to neutralize the passage, “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,” (Col. ii. 9.) he brings an alleged instance of the application of similar language to Christians generally: “In the Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. iii. 19, the apostle prays that they *may be filled with all the fulness of God*, i. e. with knowledge of the divine will, and conformity to the divine image.” p. 252. But the apostle’s expression is, “that ye may be filled *unto* all the fulness of God;” suggesting the sublime conception of an approximation to the supreme perfection, which is begun by religion now, and shall be ever growing in the holiness and bliss of the future state; while the infinity of distance must for ever remain between Deity and the creature. This palpable error is retained in the text of the “Improved Version,” and the true rendering is barely mentioned in a note, with this vapid and silly interpretation,—“i. e. that ye may be admitted into the Christian church.” As if the community of Ephesian Christians, which had flourished so many years in full organization (Acts, xx.) and

eminent stability (Eph. i. 13—15.), was not yet to be regarded as a part of the Christian church!

Note [B] p. 36.

The remembrance of our own past errors and frailties, and the consciousness of so much ignorance and sinfulness as still infest our minds, should be an humiliating and effectual preservative from rash censures and damnatory comminations of those whom we deem in error, but whose integrity and purity of life entitle them to our respect and love. The more intimately we become acquainted with ourselves and with the waywardness of our nature, the more we shall see reason to acquiesce in the observations of the great American divine who was not less distinguished for the clearness of his views of divine truth and the force of his reasonings in its defence, than for his humility, benevolence, and piety.—“How far a wonderful and mysterious agency of God’s Spirit may so influence some men’s hearts, that their practice in this regard may be contrary to their own principles;——or how far that error into which they may have been led by education, or by the cunning sophistry of others, may yet be indeed contrary to the prevailing disposition of their hearts, and contrary to their practice; or how far some may seem to maintain a doctrine contrary to this gospel-doctrine ——, who *really* do not, but only express themselves differently from others, or seem to oppose it through their misunderstanding of our expressions, or we of theirs, when indeed our real sentiments are the same in the main; or may seem to differ more than they do, by using terms that are without a precisely fixed and determinate meaning; or to be wide in their sentiments from this doctrine, for want of a distinct understanding of it, whose *hearts*, at the same time, entirely agree with it, and if once it were clearly explained to their understandings, would immediately close with it and embrace it:—how far these things may be, I will not determine; but I am fully persuaded that great allowances are to be made on these and the like accounts, in innumerable instances; though it is manifest that the teaching and propagating contrary doctrines and schemes, is of a pernicious and fatal tendency.” *President Edwards, on Justif. by Faith*; in his *Works*, vol. vi. p. 341.

CHAP. IV.

ON THE ERRORS AND FAULTS, IN RELATION TO THIS CONTROVERSY, ATTRIBUTABLE TO UNITARIAN WRITERS.

Rash and ill-founded criticism.—Illogical inferences.—Hasty generalizing.—Assumption of an extreme simplicity in the system of revealed doctrine.—Irrational demands as to the kind of evidence, and a want of equitable regard to that which exists.—Denial of the complete inspiration of the apostolic writings.

THERE are delinquencies as to argumentative justice to be found in the writings of Socinian and Unitarian advocates. We should guard ourselves against them, as well as against the failures of the orthodox.

If the one party has appeared backward to critical inquiry, and prone to confide in authorized versions and received readings of the scriptures, the other has often shewn a propensity to unfounded suspicion, and to rash alteration of the translation or of the text. This is a more dangerous extreme than the other: it is less favourable to reverence for the sacred word, it tempts critical vanity, it fosters the pride of learning or of half learning, and it often and manifestly proceeds from a wish to dictate the result. It was one of Mr. Porson's canons of criticism, not to

alter the received text without very strong reason. The Christian scholar will apply this rule, with conscientious impartiality. He will hold the scales of criticism with an equal hand, and never allow them to receive the slightest inclination for the purpose of favouring any hypothesis. The particular texts, whose diversity of readings entitled to critical attention, is of importance to the deduction of theological doctrines, are not numerous: since either the sense afforded by each reading is the same, or what portion of particular testimony is lost in one instance is gained in others.*

We must, also, put in the rank of fallacies, those arguments which, from scriptural testimonies to

* “ If a corrupt line or dubious reading chances to intervene, it does not darken the whole context, nor make an author’s opinion or his purpose precarious. Terence, for instance, has as many variations as any book whatever, in proportion to its bulk; and yet with all its interpolations, omissions, additions, or glosses (chuse the worst of them on purpose), you cannot deface the contrivance and plot of one play; no, not of one single scene; but its sense, design, and subserviency to the last issue and conclusion, shall be visible and plain through all the mist of various lections. And so it is with the sacred text; make your 30,000 as many more, if numbers of copies can ever reach that sum: all the better to a knowing and serious reader, who is thereby more richly furnished to select what he sees genuine. But even put them into the hands of a knave or a fool; and yet, with the most sinister and absurd choice, he shall not extinguish the light of any one chapter; nor so disguise Christianity but that every feature of it shall still be the same.” *Dr. Bentley’s* (the glory of classical criticism) *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*, part i. p. 112.

the unity of the Deity and the real and proper humanity of the Messiah, at once infer that the divine nature cannot imply a plurality of subsistences, and that the Messiah cannot possess any other nature in addition to that of a mortal man. The fact asserted in the orthodox doctrine is by them advanced as a *miraculous* fact; as the most stupendous of miracles: and it is therefore to be judged of, not by reasoning from the natural constitution of things, but by its own proper and peculiar evidence. If the orthodox are in an error, they must be convinced of it by other means than the reiteration of premises which they cordially admit, but whose connection with the conclusions of their opponents must appear to them an arbitrary and injurious assumption.

It has appeared to me, that one of the distinguishing failings of the Unitarian theology, is a propensity to generalize too soon and to conclude too hastily, both in criticism and in argumentation. It seems the habit of its advocates to assume a few of the broadest facts in the scheme of Christianity, which are obvious to the most rapid glance: and, with a sweeping hand, they either crush down all the rest, and leave them unregarded; or they force them into an unnatural and disfiguring subordination to the favourite assumptions. Unlike the cautious and patient spirit of true philosophy, which is always open to the collection and the careful estimation of facts, and which regards nothing as more hostile to its ob-

jects than a precipitate and foreclosing generalization, the Unitarian spirit rather resembles that of the old scholasticism which spurned laborious investigation and slow induction, and would force all nature into its ranks of predicaments and predicables. This may be one reason, among others, why these notions meet with so ready an acceptance in young minds, inexperienced, flirty, and ambitious, half-learned and ill-disciplined. Here is a theology, easily acquired, discarding mysteries, treading down difficulties, and answering the pleas of the orthodox with summary contempt: a theology complimentary to the pride of those who deem themselves endowed with superior discernment; and which, in practice, is not ungenerously rigid against any favourite passion or little foible that is decently compatible with *the world's* code of morals.

This in part proceeds on an implied opinion that the system of divine revelation is a system extremely brief and simple: an opinion which, however, is only an assumption; and which, like other assumptions, should be brought to the test of proof. Analogy is not in favour of it. We do not find such a meagre simplicity in the objects of natural knowledge. The things and the facts which the face of creation presents, are various and complicated to a degree which ever active discovery only proves to be inexhaustible. The simplest organized being, the veriest atom of dead matter, or the most familiar event in the course

of nature, each indicates an overwhelming profusion of causes and occasions, operations and results; each can furnish questions before which human science stands dumb; each is filled with mysteries. Such is the field of nature: and can it be believed that the world of God's MORAL and SPIRITUAL government, the system in which he has determined to uncover his highest glory, and from it to derive his loftiest praise, the "things which angels desire to look into,"—is it to be imagined that THESE are not arrayed in the complicate and magnificent characters of his infinite intelligence?

If presumptions from nature lie against this opinion, the testimony of revelation is not less unfavourable to it. In the scriptures, both prophetic and apostolic, the gospel is constantly represented as replete with wonders and mysteries, the astonishment of the intelligent universe, the matchless display of Jehovah's grandeur and excellency, and destined to be the loftiest theme of immortal praise.* But on the Unitarian hypothesis, we may well ask, what is there to excite or sustain the language of amazement, triumph, and exstatic joy which characterizes the inspirations of the prophets and apostles, when they burst forth on this transcendent theme?

* To adduce examples would require the transcribing of numerous and ample passages. The reader may turn to the following: Ps. xcvi. Is. xxxv. xlii. 6—12; li. 3—11; lx. lxi. lxii. Eph. iii. 8—10, 18, 19.

That many of the general principles and rules of interpretation, which are laid down in the "Calm Inquiry into the Scripture Doctrine concerning the Person of Christ," and in other writings of the same description, are just and important, is readily acknowledged: but there are others which, both in their theory and in their application, violate all sober and equitable criticism. I would solicit any candid and reflecting Unitarian to direct his serious judgment to this point. I would ask him, whether he could himself devise any forms of expression, in accordance with the characteristic phraseology of the scriptures, for conveying the doctrines of the Deity and atonement of Christ, which might not be evaded or neutralized by the apparatus of criticism and interpretation which is in the established use of his party. The force of the plainest terms might be enervated and even annihilated, by giving the reader his option of a number of constructions elaborated by profound thought and versatile contrivance,* each of which shall be eulogized as "very ingenious and plausible, and what may be

* For example, "John i. 1."—"and the word was God," or "a God," *i. e.* an inferior God derived from the Supreme, and delegated by him; or, "God was wisdom;"—or, "the word, *i. e.* the teacher, was a prophet endued with miraculous powers;"—or, if the conjecture of Crellius and others be allowed, *Θεου* for *Θεος*, "the word was God's," the teacher was sent from God." *Calm Inq.* p. 218. Yet I incur no hazard in saying, that there is not one of these *which-you-please* accommodations, which is not a defiance of every principle of rational criticism: as will, I trust, in the proper place, be made abundantly manifest.

just :”* or an alteration of the reading in the face of all legitimate evidence might be recommended as “a most happy and plausible conjecture ;” and though (proh dolor !) it could “not be admitted into the text,”—yet, “one *may almost believe* that the present reading might be owing to an inadvertence in one of the earliest transcribers, if not in the apostle’s own amanuensis :”† or the sacred writer might be boldly charged with “indulging in a very great latitude,” and even *laxity* “of interpretation,” and availing himself of the ambiguity of language :‡—or, if no other way of escape remained, we might rise to the awful hardihood of coldly “supposing” that the Blessed Jesus himself, the faithful and true witness, “might imagine” what never existed, and might “not be able to distinguish whether what he saw and heard was visionary or real.” § Against such a magazine of resources, all the powers of language would be unavailing : but let us not hear the mockery of calling it criticism.

It is, therefore, with a fatal consistency that the modern Unitarian school is further distinguished by the denial of the complete inspiration of the apostolic writings, and by the alleged discovery in them of forced and fanciful analogies, obscure and entangled texts, language calculated to confound and perplex the understanding, inaccurate

* *Calm Inq.* p. 42, 36.

† *Ib.* p. 223, 224.

‡ *Ib.* p. 206, 207.

§ *Ib.* p. 42.

and inconclusive reasonings, and improper applications of passages cited from the Old Testament.*

This, indeed, we cannot reckon among the oversights of our opponents; we can regard it as nothing less than a blow openly struck at the vital principle of Christianity and Protestantism. Inquiries with a view to determine the genuine doctrines of Christ, must, if this notion be allowed, be projects of very dubious issue, and little worth the pains which they require. What conclusion can we rest upon with satisfaction, if, at last, the competency of our witnesses be liable to be questioned? Such a principle, if once admitted, will be as powerful and plastic as any sceptic or speculator can desire; and cannot fail to make its way to whatever length may appear convenient to the exigencies of theory or the pride of false reasoning.† And what is this principle? What does it include? To what consequences does it lead?—That the scriptures pretend to be able to make us wise unto salvation; but that we need another rule of faith, another standard of truth: that the apostles spoke the wisdom of God in a mystery; but that, if we are not very cautious, they will lead us into error: that they professed to have

* *Calm Inq.* p. 19, 165, 59, 207. *Dr. Priestley's History of Corr. of Christianity*, vol. ii. 370.

† I have been credibly informed, that a young Unitarian preacher has openly declared that, though it should be proved that the writings of the apostle John affirm the Divinity of Christ, it would follow from thence, not that the doctrine is true, but *only that John was mistaken.*

the mind of Christ, and to utter the things of God in words taught by the Holy Spirit; but that they have “often applied the scriptures very improperly and with no better judgment than their unbelieving countrymen;” that they have “taken too many things for granted; have used arguments which are insufficient, make little or nothing to the purpose, and bear the marks of haste and inadvertence;” and have employed language and illustrations which are “arbitrary and defective, obnoxious and hardly justifiable, awkward, ill-judged, and of dangerous example.”*

In vain do the authors of these accusations against the apostolic records profess, at other times, their regard to the scriptures, and affirm that their own faith is derived from that pure source. Their charges would ill suit a devout and humble mind, receiving the scriptures as the true sayings of God and the words of eternal life: but they are sufficiently congenial with the habit of violent interpretation which distinguishes the writers who have adduced them. It becomes, however, a serious question whether those persons can escape the conclusion, either that the bible fails to answer the purpose which it so largely and frequently professes to be its great design, or that the writers of the bible held sentiments very different from the opinions of those who find it necessary thus to cut and manage. The man who feels for his

* See Note [A] at the end of this chapter.

own moral state and eternal interests, will not look upon this as a light affair. It is one of the descriptive characters of those whom the High and Lofty One regards with complacency, that they “tremble at his word.” On the minds of such persons, there are passages of the New Testament which will produce no faint impression. “The word of God which ye heard of us, ye received, not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God.”—“He, therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit. We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us : he that is not of God heareth us not. **HEREBY KNOW WE THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, AND THE SPIRIT OF ERROR.**” *

* 1 Thess. ii. 13; iv. 8; 1 Joh. iv. 6.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

CHAP. IV.

 Note [A] p. 58.

Dr. Priestley, in his *Theol. Rep.* vol. ii. p. 162, 288, 292; vol. iii. p. 94, 101, 189; vol. iv. p. 442. These daring epithets and imputations occur in a series of essays, the design of which is to disprove the inspiration of the apostles, and of Jesus Christ himself, except to a very confined extent; and Dr. P. adduces instances which justify, as he supposes, these harsh and revolting terms. To examine all these instances, with his observations and objections, would require a dissertation of considerable length. Many of them are, undoubtedly, difficult passages: but it has been often and satisfactorily shewn that difficulties may reasonably be expected in the records, as well as in the rationale, of revelation; and it is contrary to all just rules of evidence, to violate or renounce great *principles*, which have been sufficiently established by prior proofs, because minor cases arise of which we are not able to find a solution. I am persuaded that many, at least, of those passages would be completely freed from the cavils of Dr. P. by a serious, patient, and candid investigation, with the requisite aids of biblical information.

But the great PRINCIPLE of a complete inspiration of the apostles in every thing which they delivered as a part of the scheme of Christianity, has been established by abundant proofs. It has, particularly, been done in a luminous, concise, and most convincing manner, by the Rev. William Parry, the respected

and able theological tutor in the academy formerly at Daventry, now at Wymondley, in his "Inquiry into the Nature and Extent of the Inspiration of the New Testament." A few remarks, for which I am in part indebted to that excellent work, may not be unsuitable in this place.

It is evident that different subjects would require different modes or degrees of inspiration. A sacred historian, relating what he knew from personal observation or authentic records, and a prophet penetrating into future ages, or declaring the counsels of the Deity,—would need divine influences respectively different. In the latter case, there must be a direct communication of such intelligence as no created being could by any efforts ever acquire : in the other, it is sufficient if the writer be directed to the most proper use of his materials, and preserved from mistake and intentional misrepresentation. Yet, in each of these cases, the claim on us for the regard due to DIVINE authority is equal ; since that which God attests as *true*, though it might have been originally acquired in the way of ordinary information, is not less true than that which he communicates immediately from himself.

It is perfectly consistent with the fact of a complete inspiration, in such mode as the case may require, that the writers should be left to the free and rational exercise of their own mental powers, in the use of words, phrases, and manner. The style and method will, of course, exhibit the natural varieties and peculiarities of idiom and personal character ; yet the matter, whether historical, prophetic, doctrinal, or preceptive, will be of divine and infallible truth.

As the scriptures contain a revelation from God, they must be adequate to every purpose intended by the wise and benevolent author of revelation. The principal intention confessedly is, to instruct sinful men in the right way to obtain the favour of God, and to furnish the most powerful motives to holy obedience. But this intention would have been frustrated, unless the gospel were transmitted to the successive generations of mankind in such records as could be safely relied on as a faithful representation of the Revealer's mind and authority. It is true that, independently of their inspiration, the writers of the scriptural

books are satisfactorily evinced to have been men of the highest integrity. "But, since an honest man might possibly mistake, not indeed in facts which he affirms to be true upon his own knowledge," provided no failure of memory has intervened, "but in inferences from those facts, in precepts and doctrines, or in delivering the sentiments of others;—if we can say no more in behalf of the writers of the New Testament, their authority will be only human. There seems requisite something besides a good life, and a mind purified from passion and prejudice, to qualify them to be the first teachers of a new revelation; namely, a divine assistance, which we call *Inspiration*." *Jortin's Discourses on the Christian Rel.* p. 250.

The hypothesis that, in *every* case (for in some it was evidently necessary) the identical words were infused into the mind of the inspired writer, appears to me untenable, for these reasons :

1. It is an unnecessary supposition. For the divine influence on the mind of the inspired writer would as certainly guide the rational faculty of expression to the adoption of the *best* and *most suitable* terms and phrases, as if the words were dictated to a mere amanuensis.

2. It is attended with extreme difficulties. For example; in two, or three, of the evangelists, we often find the same discourse or sentence of our Lord, expressed by each in different words, though with precisely the same sense. If, then, we demand a verbal inspiration in any one of these cases, we destroy the possibility of it with respect to the correspondent passage.

3. It deprives all translations of their claim to the authority of inspiration; for, by the hypothesis, the original texts alone can possess that authority. Hence it would follow that the general body of Christians, who are under a necessity of depending on translations, are in fact destitute of any *inspired* scriptures. This consequence will also reach still higher. As the discourses of our Lord were delivered in the vernacular tongue of Judea, the recitals of them in the Greek gospels cannot be in the *very words* which he used, but must be translations.

4. It gives a serious weight to the otherwise nugatory objection.

against the certainty of the scriptures, from the existence of various readings. For no person, however well qualified, careful, and impartial, in applying the rules of criticism, could assure himself, and still less could he satisfy others, that he had in every case ascertained with *absolute* certainty the one genuine reading. But, if we regard the inspiration as attaching to the matter and sentiments rather than to the letters and syllables, the objection is effectually precluded. It is not in one instance out of five hundred that the diversities of manuscripts and other authorities produce the smallest alteration in the ultimate sense. Thus, in the general course, it is all the same, as to practical effect, which reading is accepted: and criticism is called to put forth its utmost strength only in those few cases in which the meaning is affected.

The hypothesis which lies in the opposite extreme is thus laid down by Dr. Priestley: "Let us read the canonical books of scripture without expecting to find them perfectly unexceptionable in all the minutiae of things. Let us consider them as the productions of honest and faithful men, well informed concerning all the great things of which they write, but not equally informed with respect to every punctilio they mention. Let us consider the great truths which they deliver as from God, to be divine and worthy of our highest regard; but when they *argue* and *reason*, either from facts or revealed doctrines, advancing opinions which are plainly their own, and for which they do not pretend to have the authority of revelation, let us consider them as the reasonings and opinions of men in their situation, and with their means of information, which were in general very ample and sufficient, but still left them fallible,—and treat them accordingly. St. Paul says expressly, that some of the things which he advanced were not from the Lord, but from himself only; and in other cases the nature of the things will help us to distinguish between them." (*Instit. of Nat. and Rev. Rel.* vol. ii. p. 37.) "Paul says, 2 Tim. iii. 16, that *all scripture is given by inspiration of God*; but this might—signify nothing more than that the books were written by good men, or with the best views and designs, and therefore were proper for instruction, &c. for they might answer all the

purposes that he has there mentioned, without their being *inspired of God* in the usual sense of the phrase; and therefore there is no reason why it should be supposed to have that sense in this place. Strictly speaking, only the prophecies, and other messages from heaven, were given by inspiration." Dr. P. in *Theol. Rep.* vol. iv. p. 202.) On this scheme I submit some remarks.

1. It destroys the authority of scripture. For, either we must have another revelation to furnish us with a criterion for safely distinguishing between "great things" and "the minutiae of things;" or, for this most important discrimination every person must rely upon his own judgment. Thus the opinion of each individual, modified as it would be by the endless varieties of character, self-love, prejudice, and sinful passions, would be in effect the rule of faith and the authority to which the scriptures are to be subordinate.

2. It is inconsistent and self-subversive. It admits that the apostles were "honest and faithful men," and yet it plainly implies a discrediting of their veracity when they advance such claims as the following: "We speak the wisdom of God, in a mystery; even the hidden wisdom,—which God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit. We have received—the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God: which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth. We have the mind of Christ. Our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us sufficient ministers of the New Testament. Be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. He, therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not men but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit." 1 Cor. ii. 7, 10, 16. 2 Cor. iii. 5. 2 Pet. iii. 2. 1 Cor. xiv. 37. 1 Thess. iv. 8.

3. There is a gross *petitio principii* in the assertions that, in relation to some things the apostles did "not pretend to have: the authority of revelation," and that "St. Paul says expressly that some of the things which he advanced were not from the

Lord, but from himself only." The former of these assertions is unsupported by any attempts at proof; unless, in contradiction to the rules of sound logic, the particular instance referred to in the latter be made the ground of a general conclusion. How ill Dr. Priestley understood that instance, or how inconsequentially he argued from it, may appear from the observations of the judicious and candid author mentioned in the beginning of this note. "If the inspiration and guidance of the Spirit, respecting the writers of the New Testament, extended only to what appears to be its proper province, matters of a religious and moral nature; then there is no necessity to ask, whether *every thing* contained in their writings were suggested immediately by the Spirit or not: whether Luke were inspired to say, that the ship in which he sailed with Paul, was wrecked on the Island of Melita (Acts xxviii. 1); or whether Paul were under the guidance of the Spirit, in directing Timothy to bring with him the cloke which he left at Troas, and the books, but especially the parchments (2 Tim. iv. 13); for the answer is obvious, these were not things of a religious nature, and no inspiration was necessary concerning them. The inspired writers sometimes mention common occurrences or things in an incidental manner, as any other plain and faithful men might do. Although, therefore, such things may be found in parts of the evangelic history, or in epistles addressed to churches or individuals, and may stand connected with important declarations concerning Christian doctrine or duty, yet it is not necessary to suppose, that they were under any *supernatural* influence in mentioning such common or civil affairs, though they were, as to all the sentiments they inculcated respecting religion.

"This view of the subject will also readily enable a plain Christian, in reading his New Testament, to distinguish what he is to consider as inspired truth. Every thing which the apostles have written or taught concerning Christianity; every thing which teaches him a religious sentiment or a branch of duty, he must consider as divinely true, as the mind and will of God, recorded under the direction and guidance of his Spirit. It is not necessary that he should inquire, whether what the apostles taught be true. All that he has to search after is, their meaning;

and when he understands what they meant, he may rest assured, that meaning is consistent with the will of God, is divine infallible truth. The testimony of men who spoke and wrote by the spirit of God, is the testimony of God himself; and the testimony of the God of Truth is the strongest, and most indubitable of all demonstration.

“The above view of the apostolic inspiration will likewise enable us, as I apprehend, to understand the apostle Paul, in the seventh chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, where in some verses he seems to speak as if he were not inspired, and in others as if he were. Concerning some things, he saith, “But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment:” (ver. 6,) and again, “I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.” (ver. 25.) The subject of which the apostle here delivers his opinion, was a matter of Christian prudence, in which the Corinthians had desired his advice. But it was not a part of religious sentiment or practice; it was not a branch of Christian doctrine or duty, but merely a casuistical question of prudence, with relation to the distress which persecution then occasioned. Paul therefore, agreeably to their request, gives them his opinion as a faithful man: but he guards them against supposing, that he was under divine inspiration in that opinion, lest their consciences should be shackled, and leaves them at liberty to follow his advice or not, as they might find convenient. Yet he intimates that he had “the Spirit of the Lord” as a Christian teacher; that he had not said any thing contrary to his will; and that the opinion which he gave was, on the whole, advisable “in the present distress.” But the apostle’s declaration, that as to this particular matter, he spoke “by permission, and not of commandment,” strongly implies, that in other things, in things really of a religious nature, he did speak by commandment from the Lord. Accordingly, in the same chapter, when he had occasion to speak of what was matter of moral duty, he immediately claimed to be under divine direction in what he wrote. “And unto the married I command, yet not I but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband.” (1 Cor. vii. 10.) This would be a breach of one of the chief

obligations of morality, and therefore Paul interdicts it under the divine authority. Respecting indifferent things, he gave his judgment as a wise and faithful friend; but respecting the things of religion, he spake and wrote as an apostle of Jesus Christ, under the direction and guidance of his spirit."—*Parry's Inquiry*, p. 26—30.

4. Dr. Priestly assumes, and elsewhere strongly urges, that the fact of a scriptural writer's *arguing* and *reasoning* is at variance with the supposition of his being inspired by God. Against the validity of this assumption it might appear sufficient to adduce the fact that arguings and reasonings entered largely into the discourses of Jesus Christ himself. See as examples, Matt. xi. 25—28; xxii. 41—45; John vii. 23; viii. 17—19, 42; x. 34—38. But the strongest proof of this would little avail to one who scrupled not to *hint* that Jesus was not exempted from false *reasonings*, to allow that he might be mistaken in his use and applications of scripture, and plainly to assert that, when Christ is said to have *had no sin*, we must restrict the meaning of the expression to his being free from "overt acts of iniquity, something that all the world would condemn as base and wrong." All this and more of the same kind was written and published by Dr. Priestley, under the signature of Pamphilus, in his *Theol. Rep.* vol. iv. p. 435, &c.—Jesus said, I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD: HE THAT FOLLOWETH ME SHALL NOT WALK IN DARKNESS, BUT SHALL HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE. But, O thou man of Nazareth, after eighteen centuries a greater than thou has arisen, who, though an admirer of thy virtues and believer in thy mission, has discovered that to follow thee implicitly would lead him into mistake; and who at length has proclaimed thine imperfections, detected thine errors, and convicted thee of ignorance and sin!—To this deadly point of impiety could the influence of Unitarianism freeze down the understanding and the heart of a man so estimable, on many accounts, as Dr. Priestley was!

We may therefore fear that it would have made no impression on a mind so prepossessed, to be reminded that, even in those parts of the scriptures which are delivered in the person of God himself, reasonings and arguings are occasionally introduced:

as in Isa. i. 18; xvii. 10; xl. 28—30; Jer. ii. 9—10; Ezek. xviii. 23—30, and other places. It is an opinion quite unauthorized by any declaration of scripture, or by the reason of the thing, that revelation should be confined to the style of axioms and imperative prescriptions. It would appear the more probable expectation that the Author of revelation would address his inspired dictates to all the faculties of the human mind, and that he would excite the judgment to a becoming exercise of its powers, as well as enforce his commands on the will and the conscience.

5. The kind of interpretation which Dr. P. employs on 2 Tim. iii. 16, is that which would nullify all the certainty and the use of language. It seems to me not too much to say, that, if such criticism be admitted, all hopes of discovering the meaning of authors are at an end.

A recent Unitarian writer has expressed himself with much more truth and sobriety, on this subject. I quote his words with pleasure, and general, though not absolute, acquiescence. The reference to 2 Pet. iii. 16. does not bear the broad construction which he has put upon it. Peter does not assert that in the writings of Paul (which, be it observed, he definitely classes with the known and received “scriptures”) the *δυσνόητά τινα*, *things or words difficult to be understood*, occur frequently, or as a general character of his compositions; but only in reference to a particular class of subjects (*ἐν ᾧς*, not *ἐν αἷς*), namely, those which concern “the day of the Lord, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat events of a mysterious character, and which, according to a known principle in the construction of prophecy, must be obscure, till illustrated by the accomplishment. Besides, it is manifest that the indocility and instability of those who *distorted* the doctrines of Paul, are represented as characteristic of a depraved state of mind: so that it is very incorrect to represent the “liableness to be greatly mistaken” which arose from a criminal backwardness to understand, and a disposition to pervert, as if they attached to persons not so prejudiced, “who lived in the same age, and spoke the same language.”

“The Apostles did, indeed, affirm that they received their

commission from Christ, and, that they were instructed by him and by the holy spirit what was Christian doctrine : but this was a very different thing from asserting, that every word they spoke or wrote in the discharge of their commission, was dictated to them by inspiration. Admit the former, and Unitarians do admit it as well as other Christians, and the authority of the Apostolic writings is sufficiently established ; and the appeal to that authority, on every question of Christian doctrine, is made decisive. Yet, on this hypothesis, it is fair to ask, may not the Apostles, as well as other men, have conveyed their meaning in such terms as to make it difficult to ascertain at all times what they did mean ? Undoubtedly they may : and Peter being judge, it is certain that the Apostle of the Gentiles, whose Epistles form so large a part of the New Testament Canon, did write things difficult to understand, and liable to be greatly mistaken even by men who lived in the same age and spoke the same language as himself. It is, therefore, in vain to contend that the interpretation, which would first, or generally occur to the most simple and unlearned readers, must be the true interpretation of his meaning. The same labour and rules of criticism must be applied to some parts of the sacred writings, and especially to the epistolary, for very obvious reasons, which are applied to other ancient writings, in order to arrive at the true interpretation."

Monthly Repository, October 1817. p. 596,

CHAP. V.

ON THE MORAL STATE OF THE MIND AND AFFECTIONS IN RELATION TO THE PRESENT INQUIRY.

Hazard of intemperate passions in controversy, especially on theological subjects.—Common prejudices against divine truth.—Prejudices to which persons of reading and speculation are peculiarly liable.—Why some persons eminent in letters or in science have been inclined, or attached to Unitarianism.—How far that system is congenial with the essential dispositions and duties of practical religion.—Worldly amusements.—Observance of the Lord's day.—Effect of Unitarianism on Christian communities.—Instance in the church of Geneva.—Favourably regarded by M. d'Alembert and other distinguished infidels.—Voltaire.—Franklin.—Jefferson.—Degrading conceptions of God the basis of the worst errors.—Unitarians chargeable with entertaining such conceptions.—Comparison of their assertions with those of the Bible.—Necessity, in order to successful inquiry, of humility and a devotional spirit.

It is not the prosecution of theological controversy alone that has excited the hateful passions of the human heart: The wordy dialectics of the middle ages, and the controversies, philosophical and critical, political and historical, which have been agitated in our own times, furnish more than sufficient proof that, in any sort of contest, men can arouse each others' feelings to rancour, and can employ all the unworthy arts of aiming at the mere victory.

But frequently in religious questions there is more to interest the susceptible tempers of men than is to be found in other disquisitions; and

that not only in the heat of controversy, but in the privacy of cool and silent reflection. Nor is it more injurious to the serenity and purity of the soul, to have our passions heated in the public polemics of religion, than it is to study divine things privately under an unfavourable state of the moral feelings, from any cause whatever. If, in human science, the mere exercise of the intellectual faculties may enable a man to escape mistake and discover truth; the same means will not insure a similar issue in the investigations of religion. Here we have to contend, not only against the ordinary prejudices of education, custom, authority, interest, and connections; but against a more potent and often less suspected cause of erroneous conclusions, a deep-seated aversion from the very design of real Christianity, a secret dislike of those spiritual, sublime, and holy realities which are the *seminal principles* of true piety. It would have been a hard task to persuade a practised slave-trader, that his lucrative employment was detestable villainy. As difficult, at least, must it be to open a way for the doctrine whose very genius is holiness, through the mists of moral prejudice, the love and retention of sin.* An “evil heart

* 'Ουκ ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν, ἀλλ' ἐν ἡμῖν, τὸ αἷτιον αὐτῆς [τῆς χαλεπότητος]. “Ὡσπερ γὰρ καὶ τὰ τῶν νυκτερίδων ὄμματα πρὸς τὸ φέγγος ἔχει τὸ μεθ' ἡμέραν, οὕτω καὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας ψυχῆς ὁ νοῦς πρὸς τὰ τῇ φύσει φανερώτατα πάντων. “The cause of the difficulty lies not in the things, but in ourselves. For as the eyes of bats to day-light, so is the human mind to objects which in their own nature are the clearest of all.” *Aristot. Metaph. lib. ii. cap. i.*

of unbelief" denies free entrance to the light of "the truth which is according to godliness;" refuses a fair and honest consideration to its evidences; and treats it as a foe whose first approaches must be resisted, from the presentiment that, once admitted, it will grant no quarter to the corruptions of the spirit, any more than to those of the flesh, and will unsparingly "cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God."

Those who are superior to gross vices may be lying in the rivetted fetters of mental sin. Ingenious persons, addicted to reading and inquiry, but little attentive to the moral state of their affections, are in no small danger of conceiving promptly but rashly, and concluding boldly but very erroneously, on religious subjects. They are unwilling to concede that the doctrines of the gospel require, for their discovery and their reception, any thing more than speculative research. With respect even to intellectual exercises, a readiness to believe ourselves in possession of all the information requisite as *data*, and a confident fearlessness in regard to the conclusions which we draw, perhaps without much labour or patience, mark that pride of intellect which is often the parent of error, but is never a cordial friend to truth. If we take up our sentiments without humility, and maintain them without seriousness, they will bring us little good if even they be true; but the greater probability is that they will be

erroneous. I would submit the question to all persons who have formed habits of self-reflection; what is the class of religious doctrines into which they are most ready to slide, when levity, self-confidence, the opinion of superior talent, or unholy feelings of any kind, have the predominance; and what those are, on the other hand, which experience proves to be most congenial with all that is lowly, reverential, pure, and affectionate, in the spirit and practice of religion.

Upon these principles it is not difficult to account for a fact which has appeared a paradox to some, and has been a cause of stumbling to not a few. This is, that so many eminent persons in science and literature have either openly espoused the Unitarian system, or have been evidently inclined to it. Let not the serious, but inexperienced inquirer permit his judgment to be biassed, or his feelings to be dazzled, by this circumstance. Genius, high talent, and extraordinary attainment, are benefits of the same class with rank, riches, and power: each of them is a favour from Heaven, involving a greater responsibility, and capable of being applied to noble uses; but history and experience shew that each of these blessings is, in the majority of cases, *perverted*, so far as the moral and religious character of the possessor is concerned. The motives, which most generally are the remote causes, from which the exertions arise which earn worldly celebrity, are curiosity, the love of gra-

tifying a favourite passion, a jealous sensibility to human opinion, the thirst for applause, self-confidence, and very frequently a great degree of known and cherished pride: while it is in only a few instances, compared with the general course, that those feelings are corrected and outweighed by humility and piety. Such motives and principles are not barely unsuited, not simply unfavourable, but they are positively and strongly *inimical*, to the acquisition of divine knowledge.* The temper of mind which it requires in its votaries, is the absolute reverse of them all; a temper of which the reverential fear of God, an implicit subjection to his authority, lowliness of spirit, and self-renunciation, are *essential* constituents. The reason of the case plainly shews that thus it must be; for the knowledge which

* “As spiritual pride is the worst sort of pride, so this is the worst degree of spiritual pride, when men do not acknowledge God in these things as they ought, but lean to their own understandings.—To suppose that persons under the predominancy of pride, self-conceit, and self-confidence, can understand in a due manner “the mind of God,” is to renounce the scripture, or innumerable positive testimonies given in them to the contrary. Principally are they exposed hereunto who, either really or in their own apprehensions, are exalted above others in secular learning, and in natural and acquired abilities. For such men are apt to think that they must needs know the meaning of the Holy Ghost in the scriptures better than others; or at least, that they can do so, if they will but set themselves about it. But that which principally hinders them from so doing, is their conceit that they so do: they mistake that for divine knowledge which is in them the great obstruction to it.” *Owen on Sp. Underst.* chap. v.

has God and spiritual things for its immediate object, and which is God's especial and transcendent gift, can never be received aright but in the spirit of dependence and humility, the spirit which comports with the relations of creature and Creator, subject and Sovereign, offender and Judge, "less than nothing" and Boundless Supreme. The testimony of God in his word is unequivocal. In such terms as the following has he declared the eternal and unalterable law of his moral kingdom :—"Wicked men will not understand judgment; but they that seek the Lord will understand all. The secret of Jehovah is with them that fear him, and his covenant to make them know it. The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way. To this man will I look, the poor and the contrite in spirit, and who trembleth at my word. I praise thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and intelligent (συνετῶν), and hast revealed them to babes! For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the intelligent I will bring to nothing. Where is the man of wisdom? Where is the man of letters? Where is the inquisitive disputant of this world? Hath not God regarded as folly the wisdom of this world?—The world by wisdom knew not God."*

* Prov. xxviii. 5. Ps. xxv. 9, 14. Is. lxvi. 2. Matt. xi. 25. 1 Cor. i. 19—21. Συζητητής, acutus et subtilis disputator,—homo instructus subtilitate sapientiæ humanæ. Schleusner.

If, however, any be disposed from this fact to deduce a presumption in favour of the Unitarian system, let them be reminded that the argument will carry them farther than they may contemplate; for it is the melancholy truth that a very large proportion (I fear I may say a majority, notwithstanding some splendid exceptions) of those who have of late years cultivated the mathematical and physical sciences to the highest refinement, have been with respect to *divine* philosophy, ignorant and audacious infidels.

Neither, on the other hand, are these remarks to be taken as disparaging to genius, or discountenancing to any efforts for the advancement of science and erudition. The moral dangers with which those endowments have been so generally associated, are not their just and necessary attendants, but are the results of human corruption; like the selfishness and tyranny which have been too commonly the abuse of high station and civil power. Such facts are humiliating lessons to mankind: they teach the obligations of humility, submission to God, and the being "jealous over ourselves with a godly jealousy;" and they add to the abundant demonstration that the spirit of true religion is essential to the well-being of both individual and social man.

It is not the design, in offering these thoughts to the reader's serious consideration, to lay in a stock of prepossessions for the unfair advantage

of those views which my convictions have led me to maintain. The only result which I wish, for myself and my readers, is with full evidence and satisfaction to know THE TRUTH OF GOD: and the only means by which I would aim to secure that result, are FREEDOM OF INQUIRY and HONEST IMPARTIALITY. I wish to enter the most earnest protest against ignorance and flippancy, bitterness, uncharitableness, and haughty dogmatism, in those who are called orthodox, no less than in those who adopt a different creed. But my desire is also to promote the practice of GODLINESS and the exercises of DEVOTION, as instruments for the acquisition and improvement of divine knowledge, no less rational and necessary than excursive investigation and laborious research. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose."

It cannot but have a most intimate relation to the object before us, to inquire what description of religious feelings and practice is found, by fact and observation, to have the nearest affinity to the Unitarian doctrines, to be the most congenial with their ordinary and unconstrained influence, and to be the most promoted by the reception and profession of those doctrines. The religion taught in the Bible is very evidently the religion of a recovered sinner; a religion of which the primary and most essential parts are conviction of the unspeakable evil of sin, hatred of it, and conver-

sion from it, self-abasement, lowliness of mind, a broken and a contrite spirit, habitual and conscious dependence on divine grace, a godly self-jealousy, a constant reference to Christ in the formation of our motives and the working of our affections, a daily and often most arduous struggle in the resistance of inward as well as outward temptations, in the mortification of sin, and in the vitality of active obedience. No impartial person who has seriously examined the scriptures, can have failed to perceive the great stress which they lay upon these particulars, as the very elements of the Christian character. But are they the elements of the Unitarian character? Is the Unitarian system found by experience to exercise a congenial, propitious, and improving influence upon them? Is it, when these scriptural dispositions are the most strongly felt, that the Unitarian system appears the most lovely and inviting?—On the contrary, does not that system, in its most manifest and characteristic operation, shed a deadly chill upon them all? And, by the generality of those who imbibe it, are they not treated with indifference or hardened derision?

Unitarian writers have sometimes drawn out their views on the subjects of practical religion, either in arrangements of the whole, or in discussions of particular parts.* In such com-

* See, for instance, Foster's *Moral Philosophy*, the Sermons of Bourn, Enfield, Jardine, &c. &c.—Dr. Priestley's *Institutes*, con-

positions, do those primary graces and virtues appear in full proportion and prominent situation? Is even any place assigned to them? Such disquisitions may be ingenious, acute, and instructive; they may display much knowledge of life and manners, and masterly delineations of the passions and characters of men; but are they not the ethics of Theophrastus and Aristotle and Seneca, with occasionally a cautious addition of a scripture precept, or a tincture of Christian improvement, rather than the “words which are spirit and life; the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, the teaching which is according to godliness;”—that which it is the characteristic of the man of God, with ardour to follow, “righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, fighting the good fight of faith, laying hold on eternal life?”*

Again: there are certain employments of talent and time which possess very fascinating attractions, and have all the recommendation that politeness and elegance and fashion can give; but with respect to which it is impossible to deny that the trains of thought which they excite,

sidered with respect to its practical bearings only, in which view it forms a melancholy contrast to Calvin’s great work; Dr. Cogan’s *Ethics*; and what I venture to call the best of them all, Crellius’s *Ethica Christiana*.

* See Joh. vi. 63. 1 Tim. vi. 3, 11, 12. See also Rom. xii. Col. iii. and the hortatory parts of all the Epistles.

the feelings and character which they panegyrize, the passions which they foment, and the accessory circumstances by which they are invariably surrounded, are in *flagrant contradiction* to the spirit and the details of *Christian* morality. Against these, and against all their shifting varieties, serious Christians every where bear their practical testimony: and, amidst the diversities on minor points of doctrine and on ecclesiastical order, this practical protest against the lusts and the course of the present evil world, is one of the uniting resemblances which binds together all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. How, then, does the practical spirit of Unitarianism operate in these instances? Does it generally and characteristically lead to “come out from among them, and to be separate, and not to touch the unclean thing?” Is it not the truth, that all the forms of gay amusement and fashionable dissipation have *generally* the Unitarians of their neighbourhoods among their principal votaries, so far as station and circumstances afford opportunities? Let theatres and balls, card-tables and billiard-rooms, bear witness. Let the medicinal waters and the resorts for sea-bathing, which receive their yearly visitants for the regaining or the improving of health,—let them declare whether Unitarian families do not *generally* mix in the full vortex of *dechristianising*, though the world will not deem them *demoralising*, gaieties.

The Lord's day is the periodical season for religious ordinances : and the experience of Christians in all ages has proved how impossible it is to combine a right frame of mind for public devotion and profitable retirement with the sober routine of their secular business, still less with filling up any part of the day by diversions and amusements. Without urging the peculiarities of the Jewish ceremonial, they find that there is a foundation in reason and experience, as well as in New Testament sanctions, for "calling the sabbath a delight [dedicated] to the holy Jehovah, and honourable;" and for "honouring it by not doing their own ways, nor finding their own pleasure, nor speaking their own word:" and they acknowledge the sanctity of the Lord's day as not more a becoming homage to the divine supremacy, than an appointment of most tender condescension to the circumstances of man. But how does the spirit of Unitarianism treat this sacred obligation? Are there many of its partisans who make conscience of its observance? Is it not *generally* with them made a day of worldly pleasure, either in part, or, if an extraordinary occasion should occur, in its whole? Has not an eminent Unitarian preached and printed to persuade men that "any employment, or any amusement, which is lawful on other days, is lawful on the Sunday?" And has not his example led many of his party to treat the sanctified observance of this day

* Mr. Belsham's *Letters to a Lady*, p. 108.

with the contempt of pity and the scorn of ridicule? Is it not a frequent subject of complaint among Unitarians, that persons who are decidedly friendly to their views, who have become so, not from the mere passiveness of educational compliance or of accidental association, but from thorough conviction, and who are also intitled to be classed with the "intelligent and respectable;"—that such persons are frequently found to be wholly, or in a very high degree, negligent of the appropriated seasons of public worship and instruction? Is not this a remarkable and truly peculiar circumstance? Was it ever heard that any other denomination of Christians had reason to lament that its "intelligent and respectable" and *avowed* friends were thus living in the habitual contempt of social religion and the duties of the Lord's day?*

From contemplating the state of mind and practice, with respect to religion, which experience shews to bear a close affinity to the Unitarian

* "We have much to lament that, even in our own immediate neighbourhood, there is so great a number of intelligent and respectable men, who think, and are willing to avow that they think, completely with us, and yet are never seen in our ranks, nor make a public avowal of their belief. The practice of going to the national church, or the custom of going nowhere to worship at all, keeps, alas! from our worship many who would be an honour to our cause, and would increase their own respectability by an upright and honest obedience to the dictates of their own minds." *Monthly Repos.* Dec. 1817. p. 717.

profession in individuals and families, it is natural to ask, What has been the effect of this system upon a more extended scale? How has it operated on communities of Christians? If it be the religion of the Gospel in its apostolic purity, we reasonably expect to find its general effects distinguished, above those professions which on its hypothesis are not only erroneous but impious and idolatrous, by apostolic fruits; such as conformity to the moral example of Jesus, separation from the corrupt world, and efficient zeal, not so much for converting men who are already professors of serious religion to a new system of speculative opinions, as for turning the careless, dissipated, and profane to a life of piety, humility, and purity. Does it appear to be the proper and natural tendency of Unitarianism, and in its most uncontrolled operation its usual and ordinary consequence, to make congregations adorned in "the beauties of holiness," and "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord?" Is it the ordinary character of its public teachers to be "solid, affectionate, powerful, lively, awakening preachers; aiming at the advancement of real vital religion in the hearts and lives of men? Are they, particularly, men of great devotion and eminent abilities in prayer, uttered, as God enables them, from the abundance of their hearts and affections?—Men of divine eloquence in pleading at the throne of grace, raising and melting the affections of their hearers, and being happily instrumental in trans-

fusing into their souls the same spirit and heavenly gift? Is *this* the ground of all their other qualifications? Are they excellent men; because excellent, instant, and fervent in prayer? - Does the presence and blessing of God appear in their assemblies and attend their labours? Are many converted, and built up in godliness and sobriety, by their prayers, pains, doctrine, and conversations?" Or, in opposition to all this, are they not "pursuing measures which have a manifest tendency to extinguish the light which [the primitive nonconformists] kindled, to damp the spirit which they enlivened, and to dissipate and dissolve the societies which they raised and formed?"*

An instructive instance of this deterioration is presented to us, in the modern history of the church of Geneva, once the glory of the Reformation. For about eighty years, Arianism and Socinianism have been spreading themselves among the pastors and academical professors of that city; for the most part under the disguise of evasions, ambiguous phrases, and faint denials; but, during the latter half of that period, with increasing boldness. Our English Unitarians have recently been gratified with discovering that, in the new Genevese Catechism, "there is not only no exposition or defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, but not even an allusion to it;" and that "the Genevan pastors are on the high road of

* See Note [A], at the end of this Chapter.

reformation, and their next catechism may not merely omit, but openly expose, pretended orthodoxy."* This writer was probably not aware, that he was humbly chanting to the tune which had been before sung by those consummate reformers, d'Alembert and Voltaire. The article *Geneva*, in the celebrated French *Encyclopédie*, was written by the former of those authors, so illustrious by the splendour of their talents, so detestable for the baseness of their moral principles. From that elaborate and, but for its irreligious tincture, interesting article, I select some paragraphs.

“Very far indeed are the ministers from thinking all alike, even on those points which are regarded elsewhere as having the most important place in religion. Many have renounced the divinity of Jesus Christ, of which their leader Calvin was so zealous a defender, and for which he brought Servetus to the stake.—They explain the least unfavourably that they can, the express passages of scripture which are contrary to their opinions.—In one word; all the religion that many of the ministers of Geneva have is a complete Socinianism, rejecting every thing called mystery, and supposing that the first principle of a true religion is to propose nothing to be received as a matter of faith which strikes against reason. Thus, when they are pressed upon the position which is so essential to Christianity, the

* *Monthly Repository*, Apr. 1816, p. 235.

necessity of revelation, many of them substitute in its place *utility*, as a softer term. If in this they are not orthodox, they are at least consistent.—At Geneva, less complaint is made than elsewhere, on the growth of infidelity; which ought to excite no surprise: religion is there reduced almost entirely to the worship of one God, at least with all above the lowest ranks: respect for Jesus Christ and the Bible is perhaps the only thing which distinguishes the Christianity of Geneva from pure Deism.*

Great offence was taken by M. Vernet and other ministers of Geneva on the publication of this article: and an ambiguous profession of faith was by them given to the world, which, instead of contradicting, in effect confirmed the representation of d'Alembert. The correspondence of that philosopher and Voltaire contains a great number of very curious passages on the alarm and agitation which were produced among the ministers, and on the ridiculous inutility of their evasive protestation. A few of those passages may not unsuitably be produced, as they give melancholy indications that Unitarianism is a "downward road," and that its progress was viewed with high delight by those desperate and malicious unbelievers. †

* See Note [B] at the end of this Chapter.

† See Note [C] at the end of this Chapter.

Another passage from the *Encyclopédie* will furnish additional evidence of the favourable eye with which the great leaders of infidelity viewed the character and progress of Unitarianism, and with what exultation they looked forwards to its ultimate effects. It is a part of a very long and elaborate article, evidently intended as a high panegyric upon the Unitarian system; though, as usual, the author writes under the disguise of an affected submission to the authority of "the catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion."

"The Unitarians have always been regarded as Christian divines, who had only broken and torn off a few branches of the tree, but still held to the trunk; whereas they ought to have been looked upon as a sect of philosophers, who, that they might not give too rude a shock to the religion and opinions, true or false, which were then received, did not choose openly to avow pure Deism, and reject formally and unequivocally every sort of revelation; but who were continually doing, with respect to the Old and New Testament, what Epicurus did with respect to the gods; admitting them verbally, but destroying them really. In fact, the Unitarians received only so much of the scriptures as they found conformable to the natural dictates of reason, and what might serve the purpose of propping up and confirming the systems which they had embraced.—A man—becomes a Protestant. Soon finding out the inconsistency of the essential principles of Pro-

testantism, he applies to Socinianism for a solution of his doubts and difficulties; and he becomes a Socinian. From Socinianism to Deism there is but a very slight shade, and a single step to take: and he takes it.*

Such has been the accelerated course of departure from its former evangelical faith, which has dishonoured the church of Geneva; and it is an incontestable fact, that this unhappy progression has been accompanied with an equally advancing, and at last a hideous, dissolution of public manners. During the twenty years that the chief priest and prophet of infidelity resided at Ferney, he frequently numbered among his admiring and flattering visitors, some of the pastors of Geneva.† The bonds were weakened and ruptured which religious principle would have held unbroken; and, as that little state depended more than almost any other for the preservation of social order and liberty, upon fraternal union among its citizens, it was torn in pieces by frightful and ruinous dissensions, long before it was involved in the vortex of the French revolution. Its moral state became not less deplorable. The unprecedented abandonment of public worship, the almost total abolition of family religion, the contempt of the scriptures, the scandalous violation of the Lord's

* See Note [D] at the end of this Chapter.

† *Considérations adressées aux Etudiens de Genève, &c.* par M. Empaytaz, 1816, p. 14. See also Voltaire's letter of Jan. 19, 1757, quoted in a preceding note.

day, and an audacity of libertinism, threatening the destruction of all domestic virtues,* have deeply shaded the recent picture of that always interesting and once happy people. Other causes may be admitted to have had a share in the production of these effects; but the great and predisposing cause was indifference, under the pretence of philosophy and liberality, to the doctrines of the Reformation; and then, the relinquishment of those doctrines, and of the spirit of humility and piety in which alone they can be truly held. Such is certainly the opinion of intelligent and respectable men, natives and residents of Geneva.† Such, also, is a very fair inference from the fact, that within the short period that has elapsed since the restoration of independence, the measures which were speedily adopted for the reformation of manners have been followed by strenuous efforts for the revival of the primitive doctrines of Christianity; by strong opposition and even persecution from the Arianized and Socinianized party;‡ and by the necessitated seces-

* *Prédication du Christianisme, par M. de Joux, Pasteur d'Eglise de Genève*; 1803, vol. i. p. 356, 357, 365, 367.

† *De Joux*, vol. i. Avant-propos.

‡ The means of this opposition are characteristic of their origin. Besides opprobrious names, private mischiefs, and wishes of intolerance, prizes have been proposed for ludicrous and profane songs; ridiculing serious religion as hypocrisy, fanaticism, mysticism, methodism, puritanism, the ultra-orthodoxy of some *exagguérés* and *têtes exaltées*; and a petition has been presented to the government for the establishment of a new theatre, "in order to turn the minds of those quarrelsome individuals from religion." *Letter from Geneva*, in the *Morning Chronicle* of Oct. 1, 1817.

sion of a numerous and respectable body from the church establishment, to lay the foundation of a *dissenting* community.

The deeply fixed, though not obtrusive infidelity of Dr. Franklin, stands recorded by himself.* But when he had some motives for wishing to appear as like a Christian as possible, he chose the alliance of modern Unitarianism, undoubtedly because he regarded it as having the nearest affinity to his own opinions.† A similar remark may be made with respect to President Jefferson. After his plainest avowal of pure Deism, and rejection of every notion of supernatural revelation, he is lauded by no less a person than Dr. Priestley, in these marked expressions: "He is generally considered as an unbeliever; if so, however, he cannot be far from us, and I hope in the way to be, not only almost, but altogether, what we are."‡

Will it be said that these are irrelevant digressions? I reply, No. It is fair and proper, and a very necessary duty, when we are contemplating a revolution in our religious faith, to look all around the point before we set our foot upon it; to consider thoroughly the tendency, the actual operation, and the living characteristics of the

* In several passages of the *Memoirs of his Own Life*, addressed to his Son.

† See note [E] at the end of this Chapter.

‡ *Mr. Belsham's Memoirs of Mr. Lindsey*, p. 540.

new system, before we venture to adopt it. Religious doctrines are not speculative positions merely; they are also practical principles: and if true, they will bear to be tried by every test.*

The chief relation of all doctrines and notions in religion is to the Adorable God, and his attributes. To error here, all other error may be traced: and if this foundation be laid in truth, there is good reason to hope for a solid edifice; a provision is made for symmetry and durability, and facilities are afforded for detecting occasional deviations. When a single sentiment, and still more when a whole system, is proposed to our consideration, we shall do well to examine its bearings on this primary principle: whether it recognize the infinite amplitude of the Uncreated Glory, and do unreserved honour to the Supreme Excellence in all its perfection of goodness and

* The reader will perceive the affinity of these brief observations with the topic of the late Mr. Fuller's admirable work, *The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems compared, with regard to their Moral Tendency*; a work, all the attempts to answer which have appeared to my humble judgment, to amount to no more than a virtual surrender of the argument. It has lately, however, been very ingeniously said: "There are, we believe, few Trinitarians of any intellectual consideration, that would wish to rescue Mr. Fuller's tedious indictment from the oblivion into which it is sinking." *Monthly Repository*, April 1816, p. 235. It does not appear upon what authority this is asserted. So far as my opportunities of knowing have extended, I do not think that there is reason for the supposition of any such change in the common opinion of Trinitarians on the merit of Mr. Fuller's book.

grandeur; or whether it require us to check and shrink and narrow our conceptions, to depress one perfection that we may elevate another, to ascribe any imperfection to our Maker, or to make him, in any respect, the subject of creature frailties. At the same time, it must be avowed, and it ought never to be left out of our consideration, that the application of this principle cannot be safely made without close attention, extensive and careful comparison, and humble, reverential, and devotional affections. There are cases, however, in which the ground of application is so broad and palpable, that if rectitude and piety govern, "he that runneth may read."

It is, therefore, a reasonable question, How do the general qualities of the Unitarian scheme develope themselves in reference to this principle?

Faustus Socinus, and his immediate associates, were distinguished, among their other obliquities, for their attempts to infringe upon even the natural perfections of God. They denied that the essence of the Supreme Being is immense, or his presence infinite; regarding the Omnipresence of the Deity as only an energy or influence, exerted or retracted as occasion serves.* They regarded the Eternity of God as an ever-growing time, so that the Deity is becoming older, and regards past and future spaces of duration as remote objects

* *F. Socini Opera*, tom. i. p. 685,

of perception, in the same way, though in a much nobler degree, that finite minds are obliged to do. *

They maintained that God possesses not infinite knowledge; that he cannot have a determinate and certain acquaintance with future events, more especially with the future actions of intelligent beings;† and that he changes his mind, alters his purposes, and adapts his measures to rising circumstances.‡ They affirmed, that in the Divine will, there are passions and commotions of less or greater violence; such as wishing, hope, and gratification at gaining a purpose; or suspense, anxiety, fear, disappointment, regret, and grief; but, to escape the conclusion that these notions are destructive of the perfect blessedness of the Deity, they observed, that, besides his internal sources of pleasure and delight, the number of external occurrences which are gratifying to the Divine Mind so incomparably exceeds that of unwelcome and disappointing events, as greatly to diminish, if they do not quite expunge, all sense of unhappiness.§ So did those men imagine the Living God to be such an one as themselves! So did they attempt to reduce even his natural

* *Socini Opera*, tom. i. p. 545. *Crellius* (whose sentiments on the divine attributes are, in many respects, superior to those of his associates) *de Deo et ejus Attrib.* cap. xviii. p. 44. ed. 1656.

† *Ib.* p. 543, 549.

‡ *Crell. de Deo et ej. Attr.* cap. xxxii. p. 113.

§ *Ib.* cap. xxxi. p. 106, 107.

attributes to the level of a finite conception!— And for what reason? Why did they resist and elude the manifold evidence of the strict Eternity, the Simplicity, the Omnipresence, the Omniscience, the Immutability, and the perfect Happiness, of JEHOVAH? To me, candour and charity will supply no other answer, than that those vast conceptions, plainly baffling all human intellect, could not be held in accordance with their proud and unreasonable principle (a principle not so much avowed, indeed, as implied), that nothing is to be admitted as a matter of faith which the reason of man cannot comprehend. I confess that to my apprehension, there is incomparably more truth and reason, as well as modesty, in the maxim, “Of God we can comprehend nothing, but that He is incomprehensible.”*

Concerning the moral attributes of the Deity, the Polish Socinians held, that neither justice nor mercy are essential properties of the Divine nature, but that they are optional effects of the Divine will; and that there is no righteousness in God, which as a matter of moral right, requires the punishment of sin, or with the dictates of which he may not readily dispense.†

Now it is manifest that the surest indications of our spiritual and moral taste will be taken from

* Attributed to Tertullian, in *Hoornbeekii Socin. Conf.* tom. i.

† *Socini Op.* tom. i. p. 566, tom. ii. p. 128. *Catech. Racov.* p. 209, 210, ed. 1609.

the state of our affections towards the *moral* attributes of the All-perfect and Blessed Being, and particularly his Rectitude, as including the attributes of Holiness and Justice. Nor is it less plain that this test will equally apply to sentiments and systems of religion.

But let us hear our unerring guide. “O Jehovah, who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness! Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, who wast, and art, and art to come! Who will not fear thee, and glorify thy name; for thou only art holy? Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and thou canst not look upon iniquity. Jehovah is the Holy God; He is the Avenging God: He will not bear your provocations nor your sins. God is righteous, who taketh vengeance. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. To me belongeth vengeance; I will repay, saith the Lord. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God!”*

“The word of our God shall stand for ever.” Compare it, Christian reader, with the system which asks your acquiescence. To this ever spotless holiness, to this eternal and unchangeable justice, is that system strange and reluctant? Does it shun their direct contemplation? Does it abound in softening and mitigating evasions?

* Exod. xv. 11. Rev. iv. 8. Hab. i. 13. Jon. xiv. 18.
Rom. iii. 5, i. 18. Heb. x. 30.

Does it, in fact, set up another god before the minds of men, in the idea of whose government the vain and carnal and worldly may feel more at ease?—It acts with reason. It is providing for the belief that sin is no very tremendous evil, nor its penal effects extremely to be dreaded: that salvation is not so great, nor grace so amazing, nor redemption so necessary and so precious, as to become the theme of all earthly and all heavenly praise, to deserve the admirations of eternity, and, above all, to require a Divine Redeemer, the Lord from heaven.

To you, my reader, who are seeking to know the truth, with a serious mind and a tender conscience, and whose heart is not yet hardened to the contempt and ridicule of devotional fervours; to you I would tender sincere and affectionate advice: and, allow me to say, “I speak experienced truth.” Cast not away the solemn convictions which you have received, the sacred habits which you have formed. If ever there was a moment in your life which demanded the zeal, the purity, the “wrestlings” of holy prayer, this is that occasion. Fail not, now, to “cry mightily to God” with your whole heart: “Shew me thy ways, O Lord, teach me thy paths: lead me in THY TRUTH, and TEACH me: UNVEIL mine eyes, and I shall behold wondrous things out of thy law!” Let not the imputation of weakness, nor the charge of enthusiasm, deter your application to the Throne of Light and Mercy, or

lessen your hope of obtaining the blessing you implore.* Those imputations are often the children of affectation. Those sneers often are the poor cover of dismal misgivings. You have not yet learned to “speak evil of the things which you understand not.”† An enervating sophistry has not yet disciplined you to the fatal skill of neutralizing the plainest passages, and nullifying the most solemn warnings. “Let these sayings sink down into your ears. Beware lest any man make you his spoil by a vain and deceitful philosophy, according to the tradition of men, according to the principles of the world, and not according to CHRIST; for in HIM dwelleth all the fullness of the Deity really; and ye are filled in him. No man knoweth the Son but the Father. Every man who hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh

* Though the truth of God receives not testimony from men, it is pleasing to observe it recognized by men of intellectual greatness. John Augustus Ernesti, whom few will dispute to have been the most erudite and elegant scholar of modern Germany, declares his belief that “non est dubitandum viros pios et veritatis divinæ cupidos adjuvari à Spiritu Dei in scrutando scripturæ sensu, in iis quidem rebus quæ propriè ad fidem et mores pertineant.”—“It is indubitable that persons of piety, anxiously desirous of the knowledge of divine truth, are aided by the Spirit of God in searching out the meaning of scripture, particularly in such subjects as have an especial reference to faith and religious practice.” *Ernesti Institutio Interp. N. T.* p. 11.

† 2 Pet. ii. 12.

unto me. No man can come unto me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him. Without me, ye can do nothing. No man can call Jesus LORD, but by the Holy Spirit. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”—Pray, then, without ceasing, as did the enlightened apostle, “ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the acknowledgement of Him. For God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to enlighten us with the knowledge of the glory of God, in the person of Jesus Christ.” It is “ the Son of God” himself who must give us an understanding, that we may know him that is True,” and the “ eternal life which is in him.”

But if we spurn this inestimable gift;—if we choose to confide in our own intellectual powers, our discernment, our acuteness;—most righteously shall we fall under the judicial declaration : “ The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear unto this day.”* We may please ourselves, and we may congratulate and praise each other ; “ we may kindle a fire and compass ourselves about with sparks ; we may walk in the light of our fire, and in the sparks

* Deut. xxix. 4.

that we have kindled ;” but this shall we have “at the hand” of an insulted Saviour and Judge, that “we shall lie down in sorrow.”* “If the light that is in us be darkness, how great is that darkness !”†

* Is. i. 11.

† Matt. vi. 23.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

CHAP. V.

Note [A] page 84.

Dr. Taylor's (of Norwich and Warrington) *Scripture Account of Prayer*; 1761. p. 47—49. The citation is slightly altered, by being converted into interrogations. Dr. Taylor had unhappily contributed not a little to bring about the revolution in the dissenting churches, which, within a few days of his death, he thus pathetically lamented.

In this connection, very apposite and worthy of most serious notice are the statements of a candid, ingenuous, and interesting pamphlet lately published; “*The Confessions of an Arian Minister* ;” &c. in a *Letter to his Son*, by the Rev. William Gellibrand. 1817.—I extract a few paragraphs.

“At the age of sixteen—I was removed to Hoxton, and admitted upon the trust of Mr. Coward, with a view to receive that course of academical instruction, deemed essential by that class of liberal dissenters with which I was connected. Our tutors were men of distinguished eminence, for whom to this hour I feel sentiments of undiminished respect and regard. When I mention the names of the late Drs. Savage and Kippis, and the present Dr. Rees, you will not be surprised that I should thus feel and thus speak. The greatest possible attention was paid to our improvement in classical learning, in the knowledge of the *belles lettres*, and in every branch of mathematical science. The students in general were undoubtedly what the world would call respectable scholars: but for the great work of preaching.

the gospel, they were most inadequately prepared. — There were two young men amongst us, whose sentiments had a tincture of Calvinism : but they were, on that account, the ridicule of all their companions, by whom the reception of such principles was considered as incompatible, not only with truth, but even with common sense.” — Having completed his five years’ course of academical preparation, Mr. G. succeeded Dr. Price as afternoon preacher at Newington-green. He afterwards removed to Ringwood, and from thence to Brentford. — “ I was a determined Arian, advancing fast to what I then considered the pure and rational views of Christianity, as supported and recommended by Dr. Priestley.” Perhaps the author means that he was *determined* in his rejection of Trinitarianism, but not unlikely to make progress in the contrary direction. — “ I had many valuable, respectable, and friendly people, who constantly attended my ministry, and honoured me with their affection and regard. But I felt little or no interest in the services of religion. — The cold, the dry, the uninteresting scheme I had embraced, could not preserve alive in my soul the love of religion. The services of the sabbath were wearisome to me ; and, if ever I felt the fervour of devotion, or the warmth of affection for the souls of men, glowing in my bosom, I checked its growth and restrained its expansion, fearing I might be guilty of what reason would censure, or philosophy condemn.”

Note [B] page 86.

“ Il s’en faut cependant beaucoup qu’ils pensent tous de même sur les articles qu’on regarde ailleurs comme les plus importants à la religion. Plusieurs ne croient plus la divinité de Jesus-Christ, dont Calvin leur chef était si zélé défenseur, et pour laquelle il fit brûler Servet. Ils expliquent le moins mal qu’ils peuvent les passages formels de l’Ecriture qui sont contraires à leur opinion. Pour tout dire en un mot, plusieurs pasteurs de Genève n’ont d’autre religion qu’un Socinianisme parfait, rejetant tout ce qu’on appelle mystères, et s’imaginant que le premier principe d’une religion véritable est de ne rien proposer à croire qui heurte la raison : aussi quand on les presse

sur la *nécessité* de la révélation, ce dogme si essentiel du Christianisme, plusieurs y substituent le terme d'*utilité*, qui leur paraît plus doux : en cela, s'ils ne sont pas orthodoxes, ils sont au moins conséquens à leurs principes. On se plaint moins à Genève qu'ailleurs des progrès de l'incrédulité ; ce qui ne doit pas surprendre : la religion y est presque réduite à l'adoration d'un seul Dieu, du moins chez presque tout ce qui n'est pas peuple : le respect pour Jesus-Christ et pour les Ecritures sont peut-être la seule chose qui distingue d'un pur Déisme le Christianisme de Genève."

Encyclopédie de Diderot et d'Alembert. Art. GENEVE.

Note [C] p. 86.

" Un ministre me mande qu'on vous doit des remerciemens : je crois vous l'avoir déjà dit ; d'autres se fâchent ; d'autres font semblant de se fâcher. Le théologien Vernet, qui a imprimé que *la revelation est utile*, est à la tête de la commission établie pour voir ce qu'on doit faire ; le grand médecin Tronchin est secrétaire de cette commission, et vous savez combien il est prudent.—Les magistrats et les prêtres sont venus dîner chez moi, comme à l'ordinaire. Continuez à me laisser avec Tronchin, le soin de la plaisante affaire des Sociniens de Genève : vous les reconnaissez pour Chrétiens, comme M. Chicaneau reconnaît Madame de Pimbêche pour *femme très-sensée et de bon jugement*. Il suffit."—" One of the ministers charges me with thanks for you. I think I have told you so before. Some are vexed ; and some pretend to be vexed. Vernet, the professor of divinity, who printed that *revelation is useful*, is at the head of the committee formed to consider what must be done. The great physician Tronchin is the secretary to the committee, and you know how prudent a man he is.—The magistrates and priests come to dine with me, as usual. Let me and Tronchin alone for this pretty business of the Socinians of Geneva. You admit them to be Christians, just as Mr. Juggle acknowledges Mrs. Lumpkin to be a *very sensible and judicious woman*. That will do."—*Voltaire to d'Alembert*, Jan. 19, 1757. *Œuvres de Volt.* ed. Paris, 1784, vol. 68.

"—Il est impossible que, dans la ville de Calvin, peuplée de

vingt quatre mille raisonneurs, il n'y ait pas encore quelques Calvinistes ; mais ils sont en très-petit nombre et assez bafoués. Tous les honnêtes gens sont Deistes, par Christ !"—“ It is impossible, that in Calvin's town, with a population of four-and-twenty thousand thinking persons, there should not be still a few Calvinists : but they are extremely few and well abused. All honest folks are Deists, by ——!” *Volt. to d'Al.* Aug. 29, 1757. (Almost every page of these letters flames with profaneness and blasphemies, under the form of witticisms, so dreadful, as to make one's blood run cold.)

“—N'avez vous pas vingt fois entendu dire à tous les ministres qu'ils ne regardent pas Jesus-Christ comme Dieu? Vous avez donc déclaré la vérité ; et nous verrons s'ils auront l'audace et la bassesse de la trahir.”—“ Have you not heard the ministers say twenty times, that they do not consider Jesus Christ as God? You have then published the truth ; and we shall see whether they will have the impudence and baseness to prevaricate.”—*Volt. to d'Al.* Dec. 29, 1757,

“—S'ils disent que j'ai trahi leur secret, et que je les ai représentés comme Sociniens ; je leur répondrai, et je répondrai à toute la terre, s'il le faut, que j'ai dit la vérité, et une vérité notoire et publique, et que j'ai cru, en la disant, faire honneur à leur logique et à leur judiciaire.”—“ If they say that I have betrayed their secret, and represented them as Socinians ; I shall reply to them, and to all the world if necessary, that I have told the truth, and a notorious and public truth ; and that, in telling it, I thought I was doing honour to their powers of reason and judgment.”—*D'Al. to Volt.* Jan. 20, 1758.

“ M. de Malesherbes vous a, je crois, donné la Profession Servetina qu'on lui a envoyé pour vous. Servet, sans doute, aurait signé cette confession. C'est la une des plus belles contradictions de ce monde. Ceux qui ont fait brûler Servet, pensent absolument comme lui, et le disent. On vient d'imprimer le Socinianisme tout cru à Neuchâtel ; il triomphe en Angleterre ; la secte est nombreuse à Amsterdam. Dans vingt ans Dieu aura beau jeu.”—“ M. de Malesherbes has given you, I suppose, the Servetina declaration which had been sent him for you. Servetus would, undoubtedly, have signed this confession. It is one of

the finest pieces of contradiction in this world. They have just printed the rankest Socinianism at Neufchatel; it triumphs in England; and its partizans are numerous at Amsterdam. In twenty years God will have fair play."—*Volt. to d'Al.* Feb. 25, 1758.

"Si vous allez voir Luc, passez par chez nous: vous trouverez que Genève a fait de grands progrès, et qu'il y a plus de philosophes que de Sociniens."—"If you visit Luke [the King of Prussia], take us on your way. You will find that Geneva has made great progress, and that there are more philosophers than Socinians."—*Volt. to d'Al.* May 1, 1763.

"—Pour moi, mon illustre et incomparable voyageur, je ne vous pardonnerai jamais de n'être pas révenu par Genève. Vous dédaignez les petites triomphes; vous auriez été bien content de voir l'accomplissement de vos prédictions. Il n'y a plus dans la ville de Calvin que quelques gredins qui croient au consubstantiel."—"For my part, my illustrious and incomparable traveller, I shall never pardon you for not having returned by Geneva. You disdain little triumphs; but you would have been delighted to see the fulfilment of your predictions. In Calvin's own town there are none now, but a few beggarly wretches, that believe in the divine nature of Christ."—*Volt. to d'Al.* Sept. 28, 1763.

Note [D] p. 88.

"On a toujours regardé les Unitaires comme des théologiens Chrétiens qui n'avaient fait que briser et arracher quelques branches de l'arbre, mais qui tenaient toujours au tronc; tandis qu'il fallait les considérer comme une secte de philosophes qui, pour ne point choquer trop directement le culte et les opinions vraies ou fausses reçues alors, ne voulaient point afficher ouvertement le Déisme pur, ni réjetter formellement et sans détours toute espece de révélation; mais qui faisaient continuellement, à l'égard de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament, ce qu'Epicure faisait à l'égard des dieux qu'il admettait verbalement, et qu'il détruisait réellement. En effet, les Unitaires ne recevaient des Ecritures que ce qu'ils trouvaient conforme aux lumières naturelles de la raison, et ce qui pouvait servir à étayer et à confirmer les systèmes qu'ils avaient embrassés.—Un

homme—se fait protestant : s'apercevant bientôt de l'incohérence des principes qui caractérisent le Protestantisme, il cherche dans le Socinianisme une solution à ses doutes et à ses difficultés ; et il devient Socinien : du Socinianisme au Déisme il n'y a qu'une nuance très imperceptible, et un pas à faire ; il le fait."—*Encyclopédie de Diderot et d'Alembert*. Art. UNITAIRES.

Note [E] page 90.

" Here is my creed : I believe in one God, the Creator of the Universe ; that he governs it by his providence ; that he ought to be worshipped ; that the most acceptable service we render to him is doing good to his other children ; that the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life, respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental points in all sound religion, and I regard them as you do in whatever sect I meet with them. As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the system of morals and his religion, as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw, or is likely to see ; but I apprehend it has received various corrupting changes, and I have, with most of the present dissenters in England, some doubts as to his divinity ; though it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it ; and think it is needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble."—*Dr. Franklin's Letter to Dr. Ezra Stiles*, March 9, 1790 ; in *Holmes's Life of Stiles*, Boston, 1798, p. 310 ; or in the *Private Correspondence of Franklin*, published by his grandson, London, 1817. Dr. F. died on the 17th of the month following, in his 85th year. He shews himself to have been greatly mistaken in his estimate of the sentiments held by the majority of the English dissenters.

CHAP. VI.

ON MR. BELSHAM'S PREFACE TO HIS CALM INQUIRY INTO THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

The author of the *Calm Inquiry*.—His account of his conversion to Unitarianism.—Observations on that account.—The Theological Professorship at Daventry.—The Professor's previous state of mind.—His transition of sentiment not a subject of surprize.—Remarks on his plan of Theological tuition,—and on its effect upon young and unprepared minds.

THE author of the *Calm Inquiry* is respectable for his age, his knowledge, and his talents, for the amenity of his manners in social life, and for the variety, the copiousness, and the agreeableness of his conversation. What he is as a professed disciple and minister of HIM “who came into the world to save sinners,” is a question too awful for human decision: it will be determined in its own time by the RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, from whom “the Lord grant that he may find mercy in that day!” But we all participate the public right to judge of his merits as a divine, provided that we form our judgment with candour and integrity, and express it with decorum and respect. His sentiments on the most important subjects that can occupy the intellect of man, he has

repeatedly given to the world, with an openness and boldness, if not unrivalled, yet certainly not exceeded. He cannot but approve the same frankness and zeal in others. If our most serious consideration will not allow us to acquiesce in his decisions, and approve his unmitigated language;* if we cannot regard him as an enlightened defender of the gospel, and an ardent friend to the best interests of mankind; no choice remains for us but to lament the misapplication of his zeal and abilities; and, by “speaking forth the words of truth and soberness,” to oppose what our convictions oblige us to regard as ruinous error.

This author has favoured us with an account of the progress and maturation of his own Unitarianism;† upon which, since he has himself thus opened the case before the world, it cannot be deemed uncandid or indelicate to offer some remarks.

Without any disposition to withhold due honour from the conscientiousness which led the Theological Tutor at Daventry to resign his office in 1789, it may be doubted whether the sentiments of the Professor in 1781, as he has here described them, were not even then inconsistent with “the design of the appointment.” We can learn that *design* from nothing so satisfactorily as from the

* See Note [A] at the end of this Chapter.

† See Note [B] at the end of this Chapter.

Will of the Founder, which specifies the purpose of the bequest in these words: "My will is, that my said trustees, and those who shall succeed them as hereinafter directed, do take care that the said students be well instructed in the TRUE Gospel doctrines, ACCORDING AS the same are explained in the Assembly's Catechism." Now I am sure that the honourable mind of Mr. Belsham will admit, that no man could act up to the spirit and unquestionable design of this testamentary appointment, who was not strictly and in good faith a believer of the doctrines asserted in the Assembly's Catechism. He will not affirm that, if the Trustees were knowingly to appoint or to continue an Arminian, a Pelagian, or an Arian in the office of Divinity Tutor on this foundation, an upright man could accept or hold it under such unfaithful connivance. Neither will he maintain that integrity of conscience would be satisfied by a Tutor's professing to "instruct" in doctrines which he did not believe; or by his making use of a text-book, on which his lectures, if sincere, must have been in the style of reprehension and contradiction.

Though, at the time referred to, the Professor was "a firm believer in the pre-existence of Christ," it does not appear that he held the proper Deity of Christ: but, on the contrary, it does appear that he was a Semi-Arian, with some remaining inclination towards a theory of which he now declares that, supposing one explication of it,

“it involves an absurdity too gross to be allowed by any considerate mind,” while, upon another interpretation, it “is perfectly similar to that which all Arians, Socinians, and even Unitarians have always maintained, and is in fact giving up the deity of the Son and the Spirit.”*

That a mind in this state should be dissatisfied and fluctuating, is agreeable to experience and to all rational expectation. The transition from Arianism to the theory termed Unitarian, is not surprising or unnatural. The principal gist of the question between the two schemes is, in which rank of *creatures* the Redeemer is to be placed: and it can scarcely have failed to occur to a thinking person that, of all possible orders of created intelligences, the difference between the utmost extremes is but as nothing compared with the disparity between *any* creature and the Infinite God. Besides, the bold hand of Unitarianism sweeps away some difficulties which press heavily on the Arian scheme: and, as to the habit of mind and feeling which each hypothesis finds most congenial to its moral influence, how nearly that is identical in each case, has been very well evinced by the universal connection and union of Arian and Socinian or Unitarian congregations and ministers, throughout the kingdom. The fact of this transition from the former to the latter

* *Calm Inq.* p. 502.

has been so often exhibited, that it has seldom or never excited surprize; and it has been more usually a matter of expectation by friends and observers. Indeed the Arianism which crept into the dissenting churches in England during the earlier part of the eighteenth century, has generally become absorbed in the modish Unitarianism of the present day.—On these grounds, I presume to think that our Inquirer's "entire surrender of the faith in which he had been educated" was by no means worthy of being recorded as an extraordinary occurrence.

The learned writer favours us with an account of the method, which to him "appeared most eligible for conducting the minds of his pupils in this Inquiry." I venture to express some doubt whether the plan described was adapted to its purpose, and likely to produce a just result. The selection and arrangement of texts was certainly, so far as it went, a suitable means; provided a due regard were had to the studying of each in its proper place and connection. But to throw down before a company of inexperienced youths, a regular set of rival and discordant expositions, "in general without any additional, or at least, doctrinal, comment of the compiler's own," appears to me to have been a method not well calculated to lead into the path of convincing evidence and well ascertained truth. It might excite party feeling, wordy disputation, unholy

levity, and rash decision: but, so far as either from the theory of the case or from experience I am able to form a judgment, I could not expect a better result, except in rare instances. Difficult, indeed, is the task to assist, in the personal and successful search after SACRED TRUTH, young minds whose judgment is immature, their experience nothing, their reading hitherto scanty, their conceptions eager, and their self-opinion often strong. If, in relation to this subject, I may presume to express my opinion and my wishes, they would be to demand, in the first place, certain PRE-REQUISITES for the study: good intellectual powers, the habit of deliberate and patient thought, a respectable acquaintance with the language, style, and idiomatical peculiarities of the inspired writers, a memory well stored with the contents of the Bible, some practice in theological reading, and, ABOVE ALL, *and without which all the rest will be nugatory*, a heart governed by genuine piety, humility, the spirit of prayer, and love to God as the God of perfect holiness. In minds thus prepared, and thus with conscientious and holy diligence exercised, the seed of heavenly truth would find a congenial soil, and a happy harvest might be expected, under His blessing who alone giveth the increase. But, without this discipline, “the truth which is according to godliness” will be unwelcome and distasteful; plausible error will be agreeable, and will meet a ready reception; and the lofty

boast of free inquiry will end in deep and confirmed self-delusion.*

But were not the Inquirer's pupils thus disciplined for the toils of theological controversy? Were they not such as had their mental and moral "perceptions exercised to the discrimination of both the good and the evil?"†—The declaration avers that, of the "*many*," who gave pain and mortification to their tutor, there were "*some* of the best talents, the closest application, and the most serious dispositions, who had also been educated in all the habits and prepossessions of Trinitarian doctrine."

That the author of this assertion made it with the consciousness of veracity, I entertain not a doubt: and if any should construe the observations, which I feel it my duty to make, into an impugning of that veracity, they would do me great injustice. But I do think that the impressions on the author's mind, which were the grounds of his belief, must have been erroneous. That any of the young men who from 1781 to 1789 entered as Divinity Students at Daventry, "had been educated in all the habits and prepossessions of Trinitarian doctrine," appears to me exceedingly improbable; except the case

* See Note [C] at the end of this Chapter.

† Τὰ αἰσθητήρια γεγυμνασμένα. Heb. v. 14.

was that they, or their friends under whose direction they acted, had previously either renounced or become indifferent to that system of doctrine. My reason for this opinion I frankly give. It is that, during the *Calm Inquirer's* presidency, the Academy at Daventry was generally known and recognized by all parties as the FOUNTAIN of Arianism and Socinianism; so that when a Dissenting congregation, which had embraced or was inclined to those principles, became destitute of a minister, it usually and as a matter of course applied to Daventry for a successor; while a Trinitarian congregation so circumstanced as usually directed its inquiries and expectations to some other quarter. That this is a correct representation, I appeal to every person acquainted with the sentiments, feelings, and practice of the majority of the Dissenting churches. Now, to suppose that any young man, seriously and conscientiously a Trinitarian, would commence his studies for the Christian ministry in a seminary notoriously adverse to his principles, hopes, and purposes, is certainly to make a supposition falling little short of the incredible. The only conjectures which I can make, to give the colour of probability to the statement under consideration, are, that rarely an instance might occur of such a young man's being influenced to this step by over-ruling connections or injudicious advisers; or that the individuals referred to were the sons or friends of some ministers of an unclassified description (a small number of which

then existed) whose indecision of sentiment led them to make professions of orthodoxy when in the society of the orthodox, while their more cordial associations lay with the latitudinarian party. It is evident, however, that the words must not be strictly construed, if said of the latter kind of young persons, that they “had been educated in *all* the habits and prepossessions of Trinitarian doctrine.”

It is also asserted that the persons referred to possessed, not only “the best talents, and the closest application,” but “the *most serious* dispositions.” Of this I can judge only from analogy and presumptive considerations; and I am sensible that I am advancing to tread on delicate, and to me painful, ground: but truth must be spoken. Through more than twice the number of years that the Calm Inquirer presided at Daventry, I have been exercised with the trials and duties of a similar situation: and I also have known the bitterness of disappointed hope and a wounded heart. Some of my friends and pupils have renounced the faith which they once professed to hold dearer than life, and have become Unitarians.—I lay my hand upon my heart, and in the most serious and impartial state of thought in my power to command, I endeavour to form my best estimation of the probable causes and occasions of their change of views: and I CANNOT WITH TRUTH SAY that *Christian* “seriousness of disposition” had apparently *the smallest* part of a

share in producing that change. On the contrary, the amplest evidence has established to me that, the precursors of the *avowed* change of sentiment were generally extreme levity, pride, rashness, self-conceit, indolence, scepticism, concealed improprieties of conduct, neglect of prayer, private scorning at serious piety, and fraudulent imposition by pretending orthodox sentiments at a time in which subsequent declaration boasted of having rejected them.

To make these animadversions on subjects so personal, I would gladly have declined : but the place which those subjects occupy, in the Preface to the *Calm Inquiry*, has not left me at liberty to refuse the ungracious task. Thankful, however, shall I be, if these extorted and reluctant observations should be the means of warning any against that rock of proud and unholy affections, on which others have made mournful shipwreck.*

* "As for those who suppose that, in the study of the scriptures, all things come alike to all ; to the clean and to the unclean ; to the humble and the proud ; to them that hate the garments spotted with the flesh, and those who both love sin and live in it ; they seem to know nothing of the design, nature, power, use, or end of the gospel."—*Owen on Sp. Understanding*, chap. v.

NOTES.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

CHAP. VI.

Note [A] p. 107.

The Calm Inquirer has informed us, that he was educated a Calvinist, in the midst of Calvinists, and fully instructed in the creeds and catechisms, and modes of worship of this “straitest sect of our religion.”—*Mr. Belsham’s Reply to the Animadversions of J. P. Smith*, 1805. But his horrid pictures of what he now calls Calvinism force us to believe, either that he has forgotten his former faith, or that his early Calvinism was but the incoherent impression of instructions received with indifference, ill understood, and worse retained. It is an unhappy paradox, that one who is distinguished for the suavity of his personal intercourse, should be able to dip his pen in rancour, when he sets himself to describe the religion of his fathers, of his first and dearest associations, and of many whom he acknowledges to have been among “the wisest and best characters.”

His pictures of Calvinism (*Letters to a Lady*, lett. i. *Sermon on the death of Dr. Priestley*, p. 2. *Reply to Animadv.* p. 14, 15.) are wrought up in the darkest colours of abhorrence and disdain. But I venture to affirm that every intelligent and reflecting Calvinist will protest against the admission of those pictures as in any degree just or true. They are, indeed, professedly founded on the Westminster Assembly’s Catechism, and other commonly approved books; but they are constructive senses, against the

equity of which we might appeal to the explications and arguments of all our best controversial writers.

Note [B] page 107.

“ At the time when this Inquiry was begun, the author was himself a firm believer in the pre-existence of Christ; and was fully persuaded that the spirit which animated the body of Christ was the eternal Logos asserted by Dr. Clarke; nor had he then altogether renounced the plausible hypothesis of Dr. T. Burnet and Dr. Doddridge, that the Son is God by the indwelling deity of the Father. He had been at that time, A. D. 1781, recently appointed to the Theological chair in Mr. Coward's Academy at Daventry, and Unitarianism being then “ the great controversy of the age,” he was dissatisfied with the slight notice taken of this controversy in Dr. Doddridge's Lectures, which was the text-book of the institution, and regarded it as an imperative professional duty to enter more fully into this important discussion, which had of late risen into increased celebrity, partly by the controversial writings of Dr. Priestley, but chiefly by the meritorious sacrifice which the venerable Theophilus Lindsey had made not many years before to the dictates of an enlightened conscience, and by the new and singular phænomenon of a flourishing congregation of Christians, avowedly Unitarian, having been formed under his auspices in Essex Street.

“ Now the plan which to the author appeared most eligible for conducting the minds of his pupils on this Inquiry, was to form a collection of all the texts in the New Testament which in any way related to the person of Christ, and to arrange them under different heads, beginning with simple pre-existence, and advancing through the various intermediate steps to the doctrine of the proper deity of Christ. Under each text was introduced the comment of one or more learned and approved Trinitarian, Arian, or Unitarian Expositors, in the commentator's own words, and in general without any additional, or at least doctrinal comment of the compiler's own, as it was his wish to leave the texts thus expounded to make their proper impression upon the minds of his pupils. Nor did he at that time entertain a doubt, that in the judgment of every serious and impartial inquirer, the result

would be a clear discernment of what he then thought the superficial texture of the Unitarian arguments, and a confirmed conviction of the pre-existence, and superior nature and dignity, if not of the proper deity, of Jesus Christ.

“The first consequence of this mode of conducting the lectures was to himself very unexpected, and not a little painful and mortifying. Many of his pupils, and of those some of the best talents, the closest application, and the most serious dispositions, who had also been educated in all the habits and prepossessions of Trinitarian doctrine, to his great surprize became Unitarians. This, however, he was disposed to attribute to the fickleness of youth, and to the caprice of fashion. As to himself, though he was at first struck with the small number of passages which he could discover, which explicitly taught the doctrine of our Lord’s pre-existence, yet, being satisfied in his own mind that they were decisive upon the question, it was some time before the arguments of the Unitarians made any considerable impression upon his mind : and his early opinions were too deeply rooted, and too intimately associated with the whole system of his religious feelings, to be easily abandoned. But being under the necessity of reviewing the subject from year to year, and at every review finding himself obliged to give up some posts as untenable, which were once deemed impregnable, he was at last compelled, though with great reluctance, to an entire surrender of the faith in which he had been educated concerning the person of Christ, and of adopting those opinions to which he certainly had no previous attachment, and the erroneousness of which he had once flattered himself he should easily have detected. Then, at length, he regarded it as his duty to speak out : and being no longer able to fulfil the design of his appointment, he resigned his office in January 1789 into the hands of Mr. Coward’s Trustees, took leave of an affectionate congregation, and of a flourishing seminary of estimable pupils, and retired with no other expectation or prospect at the time, but that of passing the remainder of life in obscurity and silence.” *Calm Inq. Pref.* p. v.—viii. It is a little remarkable that the retired professor should have looked for his lot in “obscurity and silence,” when his numerous and active friends were exerting themselves to give eclat to his conversion.

Note [C] page 112.

“ Hæc si negligentur monita, scioli redduntur, non docti; vani, non solidi; animique paulatim inescantur insatiabili multa sciendi pruritu, pleni interea cœlestium, spiritualium, divinarum rerum fastidio.”—“ If these admonitions are disregarded, young men will become mere sciolists, instead of truly learned; empty pretenders, instead of solid divines; and their minds will be gradually ensnared by an insatiable desire of miscellaneous knowledge, while they are filled with proud contempt for heavenly, spiritual, and divine realities.”—*Franckii Manuductio ad Lect. SS.* 1706, p. 11. “ It is Truth, it is Heavenly Truth, we enquire after; that, on the knowledge or ignorance whereof our eternal blessedness or misery doth depend. And in a due perception thereof alone, are the faculties of our minds perfected, according to the measure which they are capable of in this life. Therein alone can the mind of man find rest, peace, and satisfaction, and, without it, must always wander in restless uncertainties and disquieting vanities. It is a notion implanted on the minds of all men, that all truth lies deep, and that there is great difficulty in the attainment of it. The minds of most are imposed on by specious appearances of falsehood. Wherefore all wise men have agreed that without our utmost care and diligence in the investigation of the truth, we must be contented to walk in the shades of ignorance and error. And if it be thus in earthly things, how much more is it so in heavenly? As spiritual, supernatural, truth is incomparably to be valued above that which relates unto things natural; so it is more abstruse, and of a more difficult investigation.”—*Owen on Sp. Unders.* ch. v.

CHAP. VII.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE INTRODUCTION TO THE CALM INQUIRY.

Apparent assumptions repelled.—Caution against evasions in argument.—On the connection between words and ideas.—Want of argumentative equity in statements and demands.—Value of indirect and circumstantial evidence.—Duty of impartiality.—The *Calm Inquirer's* omission to inculcate a devotional spirit, as an essential assistance to the investigation of religious truth.

AFTER concisely describing the “three principal hypotheses” which “have been maintained concerning the person of Jesus Christ,” the author of the *Calm Inquiry* invites his readers to observe that, “in this inquiry, the whole burthen of proof lies upon those who assert the pre-existence, the original dignity, and the divinity of Jesus Christ.” If no more is intended by this assertion, than to bring our controversy within the general rule, that he who advances a position in argument is bound by the laws of common sense to adduce proof of his affirmative, in case of its being questioned; we readily accede to it, and the challenge here implied is accepted: but if the observation should be understood as implying that the Unitarians are already in pos-

session of the vantage ground; that they confessedly hold all that is clear and important in the question; that all beyond is matter of uncertain and needless speculation; and that they may, if so disposed, safely and properly decline to trouble themselves with any condescension to the reasonings of those on whom this "burthen of proof" is imposed;—then we must reject this preliminary as insidious and unjust. Now it is, to my apprehension, more than probable that the majority of those who think with Mr. Belsham do understand every remark of this kind with these, or similar, tacit implications. This apprehension is not lessened by another position, which is introduced as the corollary of the former. "In this controversy, therefore, the proper province of the Arian and Trinitarian is to propose the evidence of their respective hypotheses;—*the sole concern of the Unitarian is to shew that those arguments are inconclusive.*" This might be proper, if the controvertists had no love to truth, nor sense of its value; if they were theological prize-fighters, who cared for nothing but victory or the semblance of victory. But ill do such expressions comport with the mind and motives of a sincere, and serious, and "calm inquirer," after an object so momentous as SACRED AND ETERNAL TRUTH. To obtain that object *ought* to be the *sole concern* of Unitarians and of all other men: and it solemnly behoves those who are pleased with this consequential flippancy of assertion, to examine

well the state of their own hearts before Him who will not be mocked.

On a similar ground, I am obliged to object to the repeated use of the phrase "a real man," as if it were synonymous with *a mere man*; and to the assertion that "it is by no means necessary for the Unitarian to adduce proof of the proper simple humanity of Jesus Christ." This method of intertwining what is admitted with what is denied, what is certainly true with what is disputable, is well enough contrived to serve the purpose of Mr. Belsham's book. Assumptions of this kind are apt to work their way into the mind of an unsuspecting reader; and may bring him, ere he is aware, to acquiesce in the confusion of ideas and the unfair prepossession which they include. The *real* and *proper* humanity of Jesus we hold, though the Unitarians are assiduous in affirming the contrary: but, that the whole person of Christ consisted of a *mere* and *simple* humanity, is a distinct question. Fair argument will not permit these two ideas to be confounded. We deny the latter, while we maintain the former as strenuously as our opponents can do. To assume that the doctrine of the Deity of Christ is incompatible with his *real* and *proper* humanity, is a mere *petitio principii*, neither auspicious nor honourable to the cause in which it is employed. The true state of the question is, what is the doctrine of the scriptures concerning a point of *pure revela-*

tion,—the person and character of the Moral Deliverer of mankind?

“ If Jesus or his apostles peremptorily and unequivocally declare the doctrine of his pre-existence and original dignity, their evidence must without hesitation be admitted. They could not be mistaken.”* Candid as this appears, I cannot but express an apprehension, founded on the modes of criticism and interpretation which are resorted to in Mr. Belsham's volume, that the qualifying words are posted here to render nugatory all the rest. According to the philology of the *Calm Inquirer*, I am afraid that no terms can be imagined which, *if found in the scriptures*, he would admit to be *sufficiently* “ peremptory and unequivocal” to establish the doctrines in question. One of his ultimate resorts, in the case of a text which appears to bear strongly in favour of the orthodox doctrine, is that it does not “ *necessarily*” bear such or such an interpretation.† Now so imperfect is human language, that it is hardly possible to select a term or to frame an expression which cannot *by any possibility* be taken in more senses than one. If the plain, and obvious sense of terms or clauses, deduced by a competent attention to the construction and idioms of the language, may be abandoned on this allegation, a sophist must be very deficient in ingenuity who cannot invent some analogical

* *Calm Inq.* p. 3.

† See *Calm Inq.* p. 15.

or figurative turn which he may *plausibly* give to any phrase, in order to neutralize his opponent's argument. *

That this remark is not dictated by uncandid jealousy, may appear from another observation of our author. "Impartial and sincere inquirers after truth must be particularly upon their guard against what is called the natural signification of words and phrases. The connexion between words and ideas is perfectly arbitrary; so that the natural sense of a word to any person, means nothing more than the sense in which he has been accustomed to understand it. But it is very possible that men who lived two thousand years ago might annex very different ideas to the same words and phrases; so that the sense which appears most foreign to us, might be most natural to them.†

If the *Calm Inquirer* means only to assert that the interpretation of a language must proceed on an enlightened acquaintance with its idioms, he has said no more than a school-boy knows and practises every day. But it is doing no service to the improvement of reason or the investigation

* "Is an interpretation false, because the words can possibly be tortured unto some other sense? Let him name me the text (wherein any doctrine is delivered that is of merely supernatural revelation) of which it is not possible to devise some other meaning, not more remote, alien, or unimaginable than theirs of most of the disputed texts."—*Howe's Calm and Sober Enquiry*, § 25.

† *Calm Inq.* p. 5

of truth, to represent the phrases “natural signification” and “natural sense” as if they were properly or usually applied to the bald and blundering methods of translation which betray those who use them to be ignorant of the principles of language. I am greatly mistaken if the established use of those expressions, with correct speakers, is not to denote that sense of a word or phrase which it would carry, at the time, and under all the circumstances, in the minds of the persons to whom it was originally addressed. It is true that the *original* “connection between words and ideas” was chiefly, though not altogether, “arbitrary:” but, when that connection has been once established with the radical terms of any language, the remaining part of the language, which is by far the most considerable, is arbitrary no longer. Usage, indeed, exercises its sway, but by no means a sovereign sway: it is regulated and modified by the laws of association governing human thought, and by those of derivation influencing the production of new words as to both their formation and their signification. It is true enough that “men who lived two thousand years ago *might* annex, to the same words and phrases, ideas very different” from those which may *seem* most “natural” to ill-taught persons in modern times, who fancy themselves competent to interpret the remains of an ancient language, because they can find the words in a lexicon: but it would be an affront to any person of decent pretensions to scholarship, to be linked

with another who should say, "the sense which appears most foreign to us, might be most natural to them." We are not destitute of means by which a moral certainty is attainable as to the *true* signification of the words and phrases of ancient writings; and, with respect to the scriptures, we have signal advantages, such as arise from the cognate dialects of the Hebrew, the ancient versions both of the Old and of the New Testament, and the series of Christian writers descending from the apostolic times. These are additional to the general means of acquiring a satisfactory knowledge of the grammar and idiom of an ancient language, by studying its structure, comparing authors and passages, close attention to the context, and acquiring a familiarity with the genius and peculiarities both of the language and of the particular writer.*

I hope to be forgiven for thus formally making observations which to many readers must appear

* I acknowledge with pleasure that the Calm Inquirer has, in another of his observations, recognized the principal rules of interpretation:—"In order to judge of the true sense of a disputed text, it is necessary to consider the connexion in which it stands; the scope and design of the writer; the customs and modes of thinking which prevailed in the age and country in which the author wrote; his own turn of mind and peculiar phraseology, and whether he means to be understood literally or figuratively. Also, similar passages and forms of expression must be compared with each other, so that what is obscure and doubtful may be illustrated by what is clear and intelligible."—p. 4.

trite. They have seemed necessary to meet the remark of the Calm Inquirer; a remark which is either a mere truism, or a denial of all certainty in philological studies.

In the same dashing and injurious manner, our Inquirer goes on to affirm: "The inquiry [concerning the person of Christ] is into a plain matter of fact, which is to be determined like any other fact, by its specific evidence, the evidence of plain unequivocal testimony; for judging of which, no other qualifications are requisite than a sound understanding, and an honest mind. Who can believe that the decision of the great question, whether Jesus of Nazareth is the true God, and the Creator and Governor of the world, depends upon a critical knowledge of the niceties of the Greek Article? With equal reason might it be maintained, that no person can know any thing of the history of Greece, who is not perfect in the metres of the Greek dramatic writers?"*

When the emperor Commodus chose to amuse himself with gladiatorial contests, he had his own arms of the highest temper and keenness to which steel could be brought; but he took care to allow his hapless antagonists none but *leaden* weapons. I am sorry that the Calm Inquirer's age and talents and respectability have not raised him above this vulgar art of controversy. He knows well that

* *Calm Inq.* p. 5, 6.

his man of "sound understanding and honest mind" could not judge on any question, if he knew not, or knew imperfectly, the terms and expressions in which the statements are conveyed to him: and if it should so happen, that "a critical knowledge of the niceties of the Greek article" is *necessary* to a competent apprehension of the sense and force of a capital and turning clause; must not the man of understanding and honesty furnish himself with this requisite, either by his own attainment, or by testimony on which he could rely? Equally does this writer also know, that the argument from the use of the Greek article is only a minor branch of the evidence adduced by the advocates of the Deity of Christ, and that it bears a very small proportion to the whole of that evidence. Where, then, is the integrity of these representations? Where is the applicableness of the pretended parallel which rounds his period?

A similar want of argumentative justice appears in the choice of terms to represent our doctrine.—"Jesus of Nazareth, the true God." No correct and considerate orthodox writer would adopt this mode of conveying his doctrine. *Jesus* is the universally admitted name for the *human* nature of our Lord: and if we were constructing a clause for the purpose intended, we should express the subject of our proposition by some term which would designate the official character, or according to our conceptions, the whole person of the Being spoken

of. The language selected, whether from carelessness or from unhandsome design, imputes to us the opinion of a *conversion* of the humanity into the Deity; though our opponents cannot but know that both the ancient and the modern assertors of the Divinity of the Messiah, have earnestly protested against such an imputation.

In a still more painful style of misrepresentation, this author takes upon himself to stigmatize our doctrine, as if it taught “the incarceration of the Creator of the world in the body of a helpless pining infant:”* a notion about which it would be absurd to talk of “evidence direct, presumptive, or circumstantial,”† for it is a *palpable and self-evident impossibility*. But our Unitarian Commodus secures his victory at a cheap rate, when he makes his admirers believe that his opponents are plumb-bean enough to maintain such doctrines as this. It would, however, be no disparagement to him to meditate on the maxim of scripture, often verified by unhappy experience; “a scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not.”‡

Another preliminary caution is laid down by the Inquirer:—“Nevertheless, when a fact is contrary to the established order of Nature, and the antecedent improbability is very great, the direct evidence must be proportionably strong. The doctrine of the pre-existence and high original

* *Calm Inq.* p. 6.

† *Ib.*

‡ Prov. xiv. 6.

powers of Christ ought not to depend upon a few obscure, mystical, and ambiguous texts.”*

I wish not to indulge an unreasonable jealousy, nor a disposition to cavil: but notwithstanding the plausible appearance of this paragraph, it does seem to me to involve some inequitable assumptions. It must be ever kept in view, that the question is *not*, whether one, who “was to outward appearance a man like other men,—is not a real man;” but is, whether, in a case which is perfectly *sui generis*, and without example, parallel, or analogy, known to us, a *real* man may not have been produced in a preternatural way, and united to the Deity in a manner so much above all other instances of influence, inspiration, presence, or communication, as to be the most stupendous of miracles, and to form, by such union of the two natures, one complex and indiscerptible person.† In such a case, therefore, it is little relevant to speak of “the established order of nature, and antecedent improbability.” There is no “order of nature” to which we can appeal on this inquiry; or on that which is connected with it, What is the mode of the existence of the Divine Being? The only line in which reasoning *à priori* is admissible, would lie in considerations on the moral circumstances of mankind as rendering necessary, in the mercy and wisdom of

* *Calm Inq.* p. 4.

† See Note [A] at the end of this Chapter.

God, a Great Spiritual Deliverer; and on the functions which that Deliverer would have to discharge. Had we just and complete views of all that is included in the "GREAT SALVATION," we should have some data on which to ground probable conclusions with regard to the powers and the nature of Him who should achieve it. But though philosophical argument on this solemn theme is not to be despised,* the scriptures are our ultimate and our only certain ground of appeal. It cannot, however, be too seriously impressed on our minds, that correct views of the great deliverance from sin, and its consequence, must proceed on right apprehensions of its real evil, its demerit, and its influence. Where slight and diminishing thoughts, or practical feelings, are entertained of the latter; it cannot be that exalted views should be received of the former. It unspeakably regards every man's interest to lay this matter to his heart; no less than as it enters most deeply into those dispositions of mind, that intellectual preparation, without which our investigation of the Scripture Doctrine concerning the Person of Christ will be partial, defective, and misjudging. † False principles on the nature

* See the fragments of admirable reasonings on this topic, in *President Edwards's Posthumous Observations on Theol. Subj.* vol. ii. chap. vi. in his *Works*, vol. viii. p. 500—535.

† It was, therefore, with unhappy consistency that Dr. Priestley regarded "the *principal* article of our Saviour's mission"—to be "the revelation of a future life."—*Theol. Rep.* vol. iv. p. 436.

and extent of our moral ruin, cannot but be pregnant with error, in relation to the character and the work of our Redeemer from that ruin.*

That the evidence of such a doctrine should be "*strong*," is most readily admitted. But I am not convinced that we should admit the prescription of the *Calm Inquirer*, or of any other person, as to the *kind* and *form* of the evidence. He requires that it should be "*direct*:" and we have not a little of *direct* evidence, which in its proper place will be adduced. But are we entitled to dictate before hand what particular modification of evidence we will acknowledge as valid? Is it not enough if we have evidence *suited* to the nature of the subject, and SUFFICIENT, whatever its particular form may be, for the purpose of a rational assent? And are there not innumerable cases of moral and judicial investigation, in which an accumulation of *minor*, *indirect*, and *circumstantial* proofs (such proofs as, taken *singly*, might be parried off); produces a total sum of evidence

* Can an instance be found in which Mr. Locke's caution is of more important application?—"The mind, by proceeding upon false principles, is often engaged in absurdities and difficulties, brought into straits and contradictions, without knowing how to free itself: and in that case, it is in vain to implore the help of reason, unless it be to discover the falsehood and reject the influence of those wrong principles. Reason is so far from clearing the difficulties which the building upon false foundations brings a man into, that if he will pursue it, it entangles him the more, and engages him the deeper in perplexities."—*Ess. Hum. Und.* book iv. chap. xvii. § 12.

equally satisfactory with the strongest direct proof?—I may go farther, and advance a position which I believe every competent judge will recognize as true: that in matters to be judged of by the evidence of testimony, and particularly in the interpretation of written documents, an accumulation of indirect and presumptive proofs, minute, circumstantial, and unconnected, will often produce a sense of certainty superior to that which is effected by a direct and positive affirmation. The reason is, that the single direct assertion is exposed to the chance of fraud, or of an erroneous reading, in a greater degree than can possibly attach to a multitude of independent circumstances, which are secondary, unstudied, and comparatively small. Of this nature is a considerable part of the scriptural evidence on the Person of the Messiah. It consists of allusions, implications, and assumptions; and it extends to an immense number and variety of particulars. That one or two of these particulars might be applied to an inspired reformer and the greatest of prophets, on the Unitarian hypothesis, by hyperbole, or some other bold figure, might possibly be admitted. The occurrence of similar and stronger examples in a greater number would render such admission more difficult: but, when the instances are multiplied to a very great degree, the solution supposed goes on diminishing in probability, till it becomes wholly untenable. I have enlarged thus, merely for the purpose of illustration; the present object being only to

shew, that an *accumulation* of indirect and secondary proofs may amount to the highest moral demonstration.

There is, also, the semblance of prejudging and of unfair assumption in the closing sentence of the paragraph last quoted. "The doctrine of the pre-existence and high original powers of Christ, ought not to depend upon a few obscure, mystical, and ambiguous texts." The cause of the Calm Inquirer will, doubtless, be served, if he can work into the minds of his readers the prejudicate opinion that on such slender twigs as these is suspended the doctrine which he wishes to decry; and certainly it will be very convenient to have in readiness, as the last resort for the evasion of scriptural evidence, the gratuitous assertion that the texts adduced are "obscure, mystical, and ambiguous." But we reject this assumption as an unrighteous judgment. The passages which we conceive to furnish evidence of the Deity of Christ, are not "few," but are exceedingly numerous; and with respect to their qualities of clearness, literal plainness, and determinate signification, we appeal from the prejudiced dogmatism of an adversary to the judgment of the truly calm and sincere inquirer.

Mr. Belsham concludes his Introductory Observations by reminding us, that "inquiry to be useful, must be impartial," and that we ought to keep the mind open to conviction, ready to follow

evidence whithersoever it leads; to sacrifice the fondest prejudices, and to embrace the most unexpected and unwelcome discoveries of truth.* This is very proper. We cordially wish that the admonition may be carefully regarded, *on both sides*. Let each of us conscientiously guard against *all* the sources and occasions of error. But let our vigilance respect not the intellect alone: let it include a serious attention to the state of our religious affections. It would have been no disparagement to the writer of the *Calm Inquiry*, had he urged the duty of cherishing impartiality, sincerity, and the love of truth, *by the means* of assiduous PRAYER to the Author of Truth, a recollection of our amenableness to his tribunal, and a holy state of our mental feelings, in reference to his presence and perfections. Without these moral cautions, can it be expected that our inquiries will be really impartial, or will terminate successfully? The principles of human nature, and the righteousness of the divine government, equally forbid the expectation. Happy will those be, who realize the devotion and the faith of him who said, "With THEE is the fountain of life: in THY light we shall see light!"† But on such subjects the *Calm Inquiry* observes the silence of death.

* *Calm Inq.* p. 6.

† Ps. xxxvi. 10.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

C H A P. VII.

Note [A] p. 130.

On this great subject, I thankfully avail myself of the caution of a masterly writer in one of our public journals.—“ Whatever was the mode of that mysterious combination of the Divine with an inferior nature, we are required religiously to beware of all approach toward such an idea as that of a *modification* of the Supreme nature, and to preserve the solemn idea of a Being absolute, unalterable, and necessarily always in entire possession and exercise of all that constitutes its supremacy and perfection. But the Divine Nature ‘manifested’ in the human in the person of the Messiah, continued then and ever in such an unlimited state of glory and action, that it might be then, and at every moment of the mediatorial dispensation, making innumerable other manifestations of itself, and performing infinite wonders of grace and power altogether foreign, as the remote scenes of their display, from this world and the interposition for its redemption; an interposition which could in no manner interfere with any other interpositions, of a kind indefinitely dissimilar, from it and one another, which the Sovereign Agent might will to effect in other regions.

“ The inexplicable indwelling in the person of the Mediator, could in no manner affect the plenary presence and energy of the Divine Nature, as, while so indwelling, pervading also all the

other realms of the universe; and, while that mighty Essence imparted immeasurable virtue to the mediatorial work and sacrifice, it yet could not sustain any difficulty, degradation, or injury."—*Eclectic Review*, Nov. 1817. p. 473.

In the same periodical journal appeared a critique on the *Calm Inquiry*, from which I am happy to select some passages, both for their intrinsic worth, and on account of their being among the last earthly labours of a very superior mind. That article was credibly imputed to Dr. EDWARD WILLIAMS, who died March 9, 1813; and whose memory as a divine, a tutor, a friend, and a Christian, will never perish from the gratitude and veneration of those who had the happiness of witnessing the uncommon powers of his intellect, and the peculiar fervour and simplicity of his piety.

"Mr. Belsham assumes, *in limine*, that 'all Christians agree that Jesus of Nazareth was to outward appearance a man like other men.' In other words, he takes for granted that all Christians agree to be Socinians; since who, besides these, professing Christianity, will concur in this assertion, without a corrective limitation of the similarity? To that declaration of the apostle, indeed, in his epistle to the Hebrews, 'in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren,' as explained by the apostle himself, all Christians, worthy of the name, will unreservedly subscribe. Some of the ancient visionaries who assailed the fundamental articles of the Christian church, contended, it is true, that he had not a real but only an apparent human body. But these dreams are gone. It is now universally maintained, as those who take the holy scriptures, common sense, and right reason for their guides, have ever maintained, that Jesus Christ had a true body and soul, that is, a human nature, subject to the innocent infirmities of that nature. But the scriptures assert that in other very extraordinary respects he was *not* like other men. They testify that, while in this world, 'he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,' that 'he knew no sin,' or was no sinner, 'did no sin,' but was 'without blemish and without spot.' This is an essential difference of

‘appearance,’—and the Bible teaches us the reality. In this respect, at least, Jesus appears a perfect unique of character, among the countless millions of free agents who have inhabited our globe as the descendants of the first man. To that declaration, universally true when applied to others, ‘there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not,’ he was a perfect exception. Must we ask Mr. Belsham’s pardon for thus calling in question one of his first principles? No.

“—The investigation regards the person and qualifications of one who, it is allowed on both sides, is represented as ‘a saviour from sin and misery.’ But the conscience of no man ‘awakened to righteousness,” and the reason of no man who has a proper knowledge of his own character and relations, can be satisfied, without some superior evidence to the contrary, that a being *merely human* may be such a saviour. Therefore ‘the whole burden of proof,’ consisting of some superior evidence, lies upon him who obtrudes the assertion; an assertion which alarms and offends conscience, and insults reason. No one can willingly entertain, *a priori*, a probability of meeting any divine testimony so ruinous to his hopes; although a man of sincere and upright mind, who is disposed to place implicit confidence in the infinite wisdom and paramount authority of that Being who has represented himself as ‘merciful and gracious,’ will not refuse to hear all the arguments of an assailant, professedly founded on divine revelation.

“In order to know the proper meaning of any revealed doctrine or testimony, some facts necessarily, from the nature of the case, must be pre-supposed; as, that the assertion is consistent with the possibility or nature of things, with other parts of scripture, with the divine character and dispensations, with the actual state of mankind, and with the first principles of knowledge. Here, however, it concerns us to exercise the greatest caution, lest we arrogantly assume that any thing is *absolutely* incompatible with primary truths, merely because *we* cannot comprehend the nature of the evidence,—except, in addition to this, we have clear evidence to the contrary. He, therefore, who enters on inquiries into subjects long controverted, and especially subjects which involve the eternal interests of men, should beware of adopting

weak assumptions as the basis of proof. They, for example, who assume that mankind are not in a degenerate state, or, that the consideration of their degeneracy is of little moment, in reference to a plan of recovery, will inevitably, while retaining that opinion, put a very low construction on various revealed doctrines; that is, a construction degrading to the nature of the subject—a construction unsatisfactory to men of enlarged views and accurate observation—a construction, we will add, totally different from that of others whose persuasion is opposite, supposing their critical skill, in other respects, to be equal. In proportion as any one values his final happiness, and knows in what it consists, as a matter of settled conviction, he cannot be, and ought not to be if he could, indifferent to the result, whether he interpret a divine testimony in a way that is favourable to that happiness, or that threatens to destroy it. In all inquiries of this nature, it is obvious, the previous state of the mind, not only its accuracy and comprehension, but also *its moral taste and habitude*, has a very great, not to say a decided influence. Suppose two persons approach the sacred oracles for information on the present subject, the Person of Christ, each equally disposed to submit to their decision; if one, from previous associations, thinks that his happiness is not at stake on whatever side he may finally settle, and the other, for weighty reasons, is persuaded that, if he mistake the truth through ignorance or disaffection, his everlasting welfare is in danger,—is it not plain, that the inquiries of the latter will unavoidably be serious, marked with ardent solicitude, with an habitual regard to conscientious integrity, while those of the former will be of a character directly the reverse? The investigation of the one being more practical, he will be in less hazard of adopting a wrong interpretation, or even a false rule of interpreting; while that of the other being more speculative, he will be more exposed to the influence of selfish ends, the suggestions of fancy, the indulgence of sceptical doubts, and the adoption of false conclusions.

“Gibbon has somewhere an observation to this effect—that the best employment of reason is to defend what we like most. While very far from approving of this fascinating writer’s vacillancy and laxity of moral sentiment, and farther still from tole-

rating his licentious insinuations, we think that his observation characterizes a general *fact*. The mind's inclination to a result, and too commonly when in the wrong direction, prescribes to the reasoning faculty, as a reward, its office of defence: while reason seldom checks the devious and rapid strides of its leader. When, indeed, the inclination is directed, by the light of real knowledge, to the most eligible good, reason cannot be more laudably employed than in defending its elections and forwarding its progress. Let it be supposed that 'Jesus or his apostles peremptorily and unequivocally declare the doctrine of his pre-existence and original dignity,'—who is to judge what is peremptory and unequivocal? Is it not clear, that no declaration will be admitted to be of this character by one who assumes not only the inutility of the doctrine, but also its prior improbability? He will not fail to seek; nor be long unsuccessful in finding, innumerable evasions and expedients—canons of criticisms, doubts of inspiration, difference of copies, and critical conjectures without end. The conduct of another who regards that declaration as not only possible, but also probable, and useful to his highest interests, is necessarily very different. He considers himself as an offender against the infinite moral Governor, whose every law is equitable and good, and who has declared that he 'will by no means clear the guilty.' Though he has revealed himself merciful, and ready to remit the offences of the penitent, it must be in some way consistent with the rights of moral government; by some wonderful expedient whereby the attributes of justice and mercy are made to harmonize. To Socinianism the inquirer looks in vain for a solution of his difficulties; it offers only vague declamations on the benevolence of the Deity, and does not even pretend to shew how God 'declares his righteousness' in the remission of transgressions. It has nothing to suggest, but what is altogether unsatisfactory both to reason and conscience, in reply to the question, How is the exercise of general benevolence in pardoning a guilty sinner consistent with the claims of moral government and the sanctions of its laws? Does repentance itself, or the appointment of repentance, or divine benevolence, annihilate the penal sanction? The fact, indeed, of repentance

being required as a condition, and of pardon being promised as a consequence, is plainly announced in the sacred code; but this, like every other fact, must have an appropriate cause. Press a modern Unitarian to assign one which is rational, consistent with peremptory sanctions, the honour of a holy law, the unsullied dignity of moral government, the sacred character of a judge, or the wisdom of a benefactor—a cause, which does not even involve the subversion of these sacred and essential relations; and you will hear nothing but round assertions without proofs, and fanciful conjectures without probability;—you are invited to a chaos of critical doubts and discordant interpretations.

“The serious inquirer reflects that infinite wisdom can assign a satisfactory answer, why the forgiveness of sin is not inconsistent with sacred relations: why this act of benevolence involves nothing irreconcilable with the claims of justice, an attribute infinitely awful. And he considers it probable, that in the New Testament, the product of matchless counsel, and the fulfilment of the dispensations of God towards mankind in this world, this problem will be solved. He feels it to be extremely interesting to his happiness to have some discovery in this revelation, how the divine justice, government, and laws, may be honoured, while grace and mercy are dispensed to sinners. He reflects, that the Supreme Being, in his nature, is infinitely different from every other—that he may be so as to the mode of his existence, for ought that reason has to advance to the contrary—that, as his existence cannot possibly have any other analogous to it, it is probable, if not absolutely certain, that his manner of subsistence has no point of resemblance among created objects on which analogy can be founded; that finally, as the Old Testament contains frequent intimations of some mysterious essential distinctions in Deity, whereby the grand and infinitely interesting problem in question may be solved; so, probably the New Testament will unfold its nature, as far as divine realities, which have nothing strictly analogous to created natures, are capable of being conveyed by the language of mortals (language so imperfect at the best, and formed originally for other purposes), while all is communicated in a

manner consistent with a state of moral probation. The assumptions of Mr. B. however, if admitted, would extinguish every spark of hope.

“ —To pronounce it impossible for the Deity to form a personal union with our nature, in order to reunite man spiritually and for ever to himself, and that the operations of justice may have a full and honourable course in perfect accordance with the exercise of mercy,—every modest person must regard as most presumptuous arrogance. Is there any thing in this, antecedently more incredible than the creation of the world, the formation of man, or the use of temporary appearances as ‘ the mere organs of the Deity, used for the purpose of making himself known and understood by his creatures,’—which is Dr. Priestley’s conjecture respecting ‘ what are called angels, who had the forms of men, who even walked and spake, &c. like men?’ (*Hist. of Early Op.* Vol. I. 5.) Is the supposition more incredible than the doctrine of the resurrection, which is professed by the Unitarians themselves? A serious and reflecting mind cannot be so positive, so dogmatical, so arrogant, as to set bounds to the capabilities of power, of benevolence, and of wisdom in the Deity. No: he comes to the revealed will of God in *expectation* of finding some ‘ unusual’ truths, which no other source of information could supply; truths in which his peace and felicity are deeply interested. In proportion, indeed, as he is humble and pious, he submits his understanding, his will, and all his powers to the disposal of that Almighty Friend who has indulged him with a revelation of truths ‘ hidden from ages and generations,’ and is resolved to receive them with acquiescence, whatever may be the result of his inquiries. Approaching the revealed testimonies in this temper of mind, he thinks he discovers in Moses and the prophets, and more clearly in the New Testament, exhilarating intimations of a solution of his difficulties, and a pleasing prospect that his hopes will be realized. The point where his inquiries commence is a state of conscious guilt, moral darkness, and sinful depravity; a state of deviation from rectitude, contrariety to infinite holiness, and exposure to penal evil. And having discovered in scripture what he *thinks* admirably calculated to

remove his fears, and to promote his happiness, by casting great light on the doctrines of justice and mercy, he cannot but regard every hypothesis of an opposite tendency, and which threatens to deprive him of these advantages, with a jealous eye. He naturally feels as one who, when possessed of a treasure, encounters a suspected thief or a robber; while, in point of argument, he has an undoubted right to lay 'the burden of proof' on his aggressor. Mr. Belsham, however, follows a process diametrically opposite, and recommends the same to others. He sees nothing excellent, nothing desirable, nothing important in any respect, in a mysterious union between the divine nature and the human: in a Messiah perfectly righteous, 'made a sin-offering for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;' but regards such representations, however often they seem to occur in the Christian revelation, as forbidding, offensive, and absurd—throwing them aside as the corruptions of Christianity, instead of valuing them as its glory and its riches. Some, no doubt, will be glad to imitate him in this, such as dread a rational inquiry into truths and relations below the surface of sensible appearances, who are content to estimate moral evil as a trifle, and who are willing to admit that mysterious truths and impossibilities are the same thing.

"It is willingly allowed that learning and acuteness are not necessary to settle this important subject, except in so far as they assist in detecting sophistry and in setting the true state of the question in a fair light. The inquiry, indeed, is to be determined by its specific evidence; but few, notwithstanding, can instantly agree as to what evidence is decidedly specific in the case, and fewer still can coincide with our author when he speaks of it as 'a plain matter of fact.' There are a thousand other questions respecting 'matter of fact,' which are by no means 'plain.' 'It is a fact,' for example, that the human mind is either immaterial or material; Mr. Belsham decides for the latter, but where is his 'plain unequivocal testimony' for that decision? It is a 'fact, that the conception of our blessed Saviour, was either miraculous or after the common course of nature; Mr. Belsham pronounces the latter to be the case, but is the judgment founded on 'a plain unequi-

vocal testimony?' It is a 'fact,' that the Logos existed before Abraham, or he did not; Mr. Belsham asserts the latter, but does he support his assertion by 'a plain unequivocal testimony?' Were this the question, Whether Jesus had a human body and mind, or appeared as a man among men, his observation would be admissible, for it would relate to 'a plain matter of fact;' but this, we repeat over and over again, is *not* the true state of the question; it is no part of the dispute, because the affirmative is conceded on both sides. In our apprehension, the point at issue between the Trinitarians and the Antitrinitarians, respecting the Person of Christ, is this, Whether the Supreme Being, whose existence, it is demonstrable, is essentially different from every other, and whose mode of existence *may* be so, for aught that reason can allege to the contrary,—that Being whose energies of wisdom, power, and goodness unfolded themselves in the work of creation, beginning with a rude chaotic mass, and proceeding to innumerable forms of order and beauty, regularity of operation and usefulness of result,—whether this First Being, in some wonderfully mysterious manner, a manner not less mysterious than creation itself, united himself to human nature as the basis of a new order of things in reference to the moral world? It is universally admitted, that out of nothing he produced a chaos 'without form and void,' and that from this chaos he educed unspeakable grandeur and beauty, in order to manifest the glory of his perfections, and to communicate his goodness in a manner worthy of himself. Why then, we ask, should it be thought incredible or improbable, that the *moral* order of things, to which the physical is infinitely subservient, should originate in the predestined assumption of human nature,—and that this took place at the fulness of time? Why may it not be concluded of this, 'The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men?' (1 Cor. i. 25.) The nature and perfections of Deity, his works of creation and providence, the generation and growth of animals and plants, the formation of mineral substances, are full of mysteries, and is it to be expected that the moral world, so much less within the sphere of sen-

sible observation and experiment, should be grossly and palpably plain?

“ It is not true, that the advocates of the Trinitarian doctrine respecting the person of Christ maintain, as their opponents are anxious to insinuate (we do not pretend to assign the motive), that God was converted into man, or that the humanity of Christ is God. It is not true that they hold that any *change* whatever took place in the Godhead, on the assumption of our nature. They are not so grossly ignorant as to suppose it possible. But they *do* maintain, as a grand and glorious truth, a truth calculated to satisfy the largest desires, the most importunate cravings of the mind, to shed the most exhilarating light on the laws and sanctions, the justice and government of God, and their consistency with the exercise of his pardoning and purifying mercy,—that the human nature of Jesus was so assumed by a modal distinction of Deity (which distinction, no terms in any language of mortals is adequate to express), that it had no personal existence independently of that assumption. Human languages are formed on physical analogies, but here an exact analogy cannot, it is obvious from the nature of the case, be found to convey the ideas intended. Here, different expressions are used in several connections, or else recourse must be had to circumlocutory explanations; which, after all, to a mere verbalist, or a cavilling objector, must unavoidably leave much room for petty criticism. Whether the terms Form, Son, Word, Wisdom, Power, Subsistence, Person, or any other, be adopted out of human vocabularies, in order to express that modal distinction in deity by which the human nature was assumed; still the reality intended cannot rationally be expected to be adequately designated by words and phrases originally formed to convey ideas so essentially different.

“ Of this inadequacy of language to define, or even to describe supernatural realities, many of the Antitrinitarians, both ancient and modern, have taken a disingenuous advantage. This also is the frequent practice of sceptics and infidels, in their allusions to the phraseology of scripture. But all such men, and especially those who wish to retain the Christian name, must be either pitied or blamed; because, if they are free from lamentable ignorance, they are charge-

able with criminal perversity. Whether the language of our author be not too often tinged, we may say, strongly tinged, with this species of pollution, let the Christian reader judge for himself.

“ The *incarceration* of the Creator of the world in the body of a helpless, *puling* infant, is a fact, the credit of which must rest, like that of all other facts, not upon grammatical subtleties, but upon evidence direct, presumptive, or circumstantial, upon the validity of which every person of common sense is competent to decide.” p. 6.

“ In what an awful state of obdurate impiety must the mind of that man be, who could pen such a paragraph as this! The sentiment, indeed, is worthy of an infidel, but for the credit of our nature, we hope that the bad eminence of being able to express it with the same degree of coarse and vulgar levity belongs to Mr. Belsham. With equal justice might a malignant spirit (if, at the period to which we are going to allude, spirits there were who had rendered themselves vile), deride such mysterious propositions as these,—that the hidden energies of the Omnipotent, operating in the first dark and formless embryo, would, in a very short time, develope themselves in a bright and beauteous universe, that should continue through revolving ages pregnant with interesting wonders and glorious benevolence—that the same energies would shortly, through the medium of a very small portion of inert matter, shew themselves in an organic form of astonishing mechanism and admirable symmetry, as the lord of a terraqueous globe, the organ also of an intellect, of powers and passions, capable of dignity, of happiness or misery beyond description—that these energies, also, would fix upon an insignificant part of the same created form, and cause it to evolve itself into a structure resembling the other, with diversities, however, full of wisdom and design—that the same omnipotent energies, moreover, would, by a mysterious law, fix on a recondite particle, as a physical rallying point, in perpetual succession, and produce a race of human beings of different sexes, with an exact adjustment of numerical proportion of each—that, finally, when all these bodies should be reduced to their primordial inert particles, these divine energies would assume some physical points, around which other subtile atoms would instantly rally, un-

folding themselves into as many forms as existed before, but far more splendid and permanent, as suited to a corresponding exalted state of things, and possessing so much of comparative identity (an identity of moral use), as to justify their being called resuscitated bodies. Had these facts been announced to the malignant spirit we have supposed, he would have laughed them to scorn as incredible fables; and yet they are facts acknowledged, we presume, by modern 'Unitarians,' though, *a priori*, not more credible than what the Trinitarians consider as a fact attested by various representations in the New Testament; a fact at once mysterious as to the *modus operandi*, interesting above all comparison to every human being, and infinitely glorious in its consequences. This fact implies that a particle of material nature is assumed, as the element evolved by the animal principle,—that both are unfolded by a rational more interior principle,—and that for reasons infinitely wise and benevolent, all are expanded by the indwelling energy of the divine Word, or Wisdom, or Power, or Son of God, for manifesting the glories of his nature, his relations and perfections, to a degree far more transcendent and sublime than any other process in the universe. Such are the characters of the two natures, the divine and human, it is maintained by some, as implied in scriptural declarations and their uses; and such the supernatural union subsisting between these natures, the one assuming and the other assumed, though in themselves abstractedly considered objects infinitely dissimilar, that the humanity has no personal existence, but the modal subsistence of Jehovah, which, as before observed, is variously expressed; and that this divine subsistence has neither developement nor exercise in redeeming men from sin and misery, but by the humanity as its organ. So that Jesus, it is maintained, is the organic medium of the divine nature, *sui generis*, in a way essentially different from every other prophet. In and through this medium, the Deity displays himself to the enlightened intelligent universe, by the fullest expansion and glory of which the human nature is capable, through endless ages. Inadequate as may be this representation of the subject, as indeed every verbal one must unavoidably ever be, it harmonizes, we apprehend, with that which is contained in the New Testam-

ment, without having recourse to the strained, far-fetched, and unnatural comments of Socinianism. It fully justifies the scriptural application of names and titles, works and offices, to Jesus Christ, and the strong ascriptions of honour and praise so frequently applied to him; instead of reducing them, as the Socinians effectually do, by their critical alembic, into a mere *caput mortuum*.

“ It is a calumny often urged by these ingenuous persons, that the Trinitarians are guilty of idolatry in worshipping Jesus Christ. Now this charge can have no appearance of pertinency, except on one of these two suppositions; either that there is no personal union between the divine and human natures, which is to beg the question in dispute; or, that the human nature of Jesus is regarded as an object of worship, which is peremptorily denied. The consistent Trinitarian does not worship the human nature, though assumed by the divine, and though ‘crowned with glory and honour’ inexpressible, but Him to whom that nature is hypostatically united, and who is discriminatively identified by that union. Nor does he present religious homage to three ultimate objects, when he adores the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit; but to the one Eternal Existence, who has revealed himself under these personal relations; relations, however, which are understood to be essential to that Eternal Existence, and without which he would not be Jehovah. Through the defect of language terms of analogical relations are unavoidably employed; but no sentiment is admitted which implies any possible change in deity, and much less is it supposed that these expressions of personal relations are intended to countenance the absurd notion of their being effects of power and will.

“ It will be readily granted, that a critical knowledge of the niceties of language contributes but little towards an accurate perception of celestial truths. (1 Cor. i. 19, &c.) ‘A sound understanding and an honest mind’ are, doubtless, of greater moment; but it is not easy to convince any man that his understanding is not sound, that his heart is not honest: and many will suspect that the short passage last quoted does not proceed from sources quite so respectable. ‘The incarceration of the Creator of the world in the body of a helpless puling infant.’

What could produce this profane effusion, but strong and unrestrained prejudice at the commencement of the inquiry. The latter of these marked expressions will appear to most 'calm' inquirers, as an exuberant ebullition of contempt against the doctrine itself, which is here impiously ridiculed, and against myriads of Christians of unquestioned virtue, talents, learning, piety and integrity. The former expression indicates either a want of knowledge or a culpable misrepresentation. It conveys to most readers, and to all, in its plain construction, that the Creator is inclosed or circumscribed by the human nature of Jesus, as a man is by the walls of a prison! Is it possible that this representation can proceed from a mind imbued with the slightest tincture of candour or decency? What Trinitarian was ever absurd enough to entertain for a moment the sentiment here imputed to the whole body? Do they, when they with reverence represent the Deity as assuming the essential principles of our nature for the purpose of expanding them to the utmost limits of which that nature is capable, and of illustrating before adoring myriads, the harmony and grandeur of divine perfections in the salvation of countless multitudes of the human race,—do they deserve to be outraged with the low ribaldry we have quoted—a mode of expression, we will venture to say, which is much more appropriate to the character of a renegade, than a Christian. Mr. Belsham would do well to reconsider what he has written, with 'a sound understanding and an honest mind.' In truth, his efforts to characterize 'the Saviour of the world,' as a mere prophet, who has delivered to us great truths, but who does not 'save his people from their sins,' either by a propitiation or by power, resembles that of a man who should diligently labour to sink a ship, without being able to furnish the crew with even a plank for their escape; or that of one who should attempt to blow up a citadel, when he has not the means of providing a cottage or a tent, for the dislodged garrison. A prophet may be more or less influenced, or filled with a divine impulse; but this does not constitute him different from other men in his original formation, or in his mode of subsistence; and consequently he would be destitute of the most essential requisite of 'a saviour from sin and misery.'

Nor is it conceivable that such a man, however 'full of faith and the Holy Ghost;' however endowed with knowledge and wisdom; with graces, energies, and miraculous gifts, could make approximations, even the smallest, towards removing the difficulties introduced by sin, in the way of our happiness, or casting any light on the character, the government, and the dispensations of God."

BOOK II.



ON THE
INFORMATION TO BE OBTAINED
CONCERNING THE
Person of the Messiah,
FROM THE
PROPHETIC DESCRIPTIONS
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT.

INTRODUCTION.

THAT the official character which all Christians believe to have been sustained by JESUS of Nazareth, was the object of prophecy and of solicitous expectation, under the earlier schemes of divine revelation, is a position which it is difficult to suppose that any deny who make serious pretensions to the name of Christian. If this be admitted, it seems an easy and obvious consequence, that any rational inquiry into the person, or functions, proper to that character, should begin by collecting every descriptive particular from the records of the Old Testament, by singly scrutinizing their import, and by a just comparison and combination of them all. Whether such a course of inquiry would be, of itself, sufficient to determine the great question at issue, or not; it could not fail to be an useful preparative to the examination of the Christian scriptures. The writers of the New Testament evidently suppose in their readers an acquaintance with the facts and doctrines of the

preceding dispensations: they build upon them as the foundation of the Christian system, and they rarely appear solicitous to deliver anew those facts and doctrines which it was thus their habit to regard as known and admitted.

Obvious and natural as this line of investigation appears, the author of the *Calm Inquiry* has scarcely given it a place in his volume. He has introduced a very brief section on the question, whether "the Jews expected a pre-existent Messiah:"* but the question is instituted solely in relation to the contemporaries of Jesus and the apostles, a subject materially differing from that now proposed. I say nothing at present of the summary proceeding by which a question, certainly not trivial nor very easy, is dispatched in a few lines: the argument will, in its place, come before us. In another place,† indeed, he approaches more nearly to the view of the question on which we are now entering: but, in this instance, he only mentions five or six passages from the prophets; passages which are of the most weak and dubious kind as arguments in this controversy; and which, after a bare recital and two

* *Calm Inq.* p. 10.

† P. 311. The passages cited are Is. lxiii. 8, 9. Hos. i. 7. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, comp. with Zech. xiii. 7. Hos. iii. 5, comp. with Micah iv. 7.

or three short remarks, are dismissed with a *coronis* not surely very “calm” nor very candid:—
“Such arguments admit of no reply. One can only wonder that learned men can impose upon themselves by such slender and miserable sophisms.” Unmoved, however, by this scorn, we shall pursue the course of investigation which the reason of the case requires.

But, though the *Calm Inquiry* will not assist us far in this part of our pursuit, the reader will find that the interpretations of the author, and of other Unitarian writers, will be introduced and considered in their places.

CHAP. I.

ON THE TERM MESSIAH.

IN the primitive ages of mankind, the poverty of rude language, and the difficulty of conveying information to distant places and future times, led to the invention of symbolical actions, as means of communicating and perpetuating the knowledge which was deemed valuable. Some of those actions were of divine institution; and it was not beneath the wise and provident care of heaven, to employ those which might be purely of human contrivance, as a vehicle for the transmission of truths the most interesting for mortals to know. One of these primeval symbols was the affusion of oil, to denote consecration to the immediate service or homage of the Deity. The earliest records in the world inform us, that, in commemoration of distinguished mercies from God, Jacob reared a rough stone for a pillar, and “poured oil upon the top of it, and called the name of that place Bethel,” the HOUSE OF GOD.* To this action is made the first application of the word *to anoint*, which occurs in scripture.† It is afterwards

* Gen. xxviii. 18.

† Ch. xxxi. 13.

applied to the consecration of persons; and denoted a ceremony of inauguration to the most important offices known among men,—the SACERDOTAL, the REGAL, and the PROPHETIC.

1. By the command of JEHOVAH, this ceremony was used in setting apart the HIGH PRIEST and his brethren, in the ecclesiastical constitution of the Israelites. “Thou shalt put [the sacred vestments] upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, and shalt *anoint* them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them; that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office:—for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.” *

2. Saul, David, and their successors in the throne, were, by divine direction, designated to ROYALTY, by “the pouring of oil upon the head; because the Lord had *anointed* them to be captain over his inheritance.” † The “anointed of the Lord” was the common appellation of the Jewish kings; and it is in prophecy applied to Cyrus, the Persian monarch, on account of his being raised up, directed, and prospered in his enterprises, by a peculiar providence, and because the epithet would be understood by the Jews as an assurance that he was a sovereign under the divine sanction. ‡

* Ex. xxviii. 41. xl. 15.

† Is. xlv. 1—5, 13.

‡ 1 Sam. x. 1.

3. Elijah was commanded to “*anoint* Elisha, to be **PROPHET** in his room :” * and that future Personage who was to announce “good tidings to the poor,” is introduced as “anointed by **JEHOVAH**” to his gracious mission. †

Thus we have evidence, that this rite was practised under the Jewish dispensation; that a great and exclusive importance was attached to it, for it was employed only in the cases enumerated; and that it was observed upon the ground of **DIVINE** institution.

If a conjecture may be indulged on the reason of this symbol, perhaps we may not absurdly suppose that it was intended, by the fragrance and costliness of the preparation made use of, ‡ to signify both the high importance of the functions which were thus, above all others, distinguished, and the valuable and excellent qualifications which ought to adorn the persons designated to those offices. §

The annotator on the *Improved Version* asserts that “the Israelites are called Christs, or anointed,

* 1 Kings, xix. 16.

† Is. lxi. 1.

‡ Ex. xxx. 23—25. A compound of several highly odorous essential oils, in large proportions, with olive oil.

§ This conjecture seems to be countenanced by the comparison in Ps. cxxxiii. 2.

i. e. a chosen and favoured people, Psalm cv. 15. Hab. iii. 13.”* But neither of these instances will bear out the allegation. The first evidently refers to Abraham and the other chief patriarchs, who were princes, priests, and prophets : † and, in the other passage, the singular “ thine anointed,” is put, by a common poetical enallage, for the chiefs of the Hebrew nation, as distinguished from the general mass of the people.

Such was the origin, and such the primary signification of the sacred appellative, *anointed*; which, in its Hebrew and Greek forms, *Messiah* and *Christ*, has been adopted into most other languages.

* Note on Heb. xi. 26. The apparent design of this gloss is to preclude the supposition that the piety of Moses had any respect to the hope of a Messiah.

† “ Because, in the time of David, it was the custom to anoint priests and prophets, the poet, in order to intimate that the patriarchs were priests of the True God, and were therefore to be revered as consecrated persons, calls them *anointed*; and in the corresponding hemistich, *prophets*, as indeed Abraham is expressly denominated, Gen. xx. 7. Jarchi, Aben-Ezra, Kimchi, and other Rabbinical commentators, understand, by *anointed*, princes and chieftains: see Gen. xxiii. 6, and that they were called *prophets*, because they predicted future events.”
Rosenmuller, jun. in Ps. cv. 15.

CHAP. II.

ON THE EARLY EXPECTATION OF THE MESSIAH.

THAT from the earliest times an expectation prevailed of a Great Personage to arise at some future period, and to be the Deliverer and Saviour of mankind from their moral and natural miseries, is well known to all who have studied primeval history, and is generally received by believers in revelation. This expected benefactor was the MESSIAH described in the Hebrew sacred books; who should unite in his own person the dignities of prophet, priest, and king, that he might confer SALVATION on our fallen world.

Those books, whether considered as the only credible monuments of the remotest ages, or as invested with the authoritative character of a superintending inspiration, are our best evidences of the existence and the grounds of such an expectation, and of the particular ideas which it included. In an ensuing chapter those passages will come under review which can be regarded with sufficient evidence as prophetically descriptive of the Messiah. It will be sufficient now to mention some

proofs of the fact, that this expectation was entertained by the early generations of mankind.

On the birth of her first-born, Eve expressed her gratitude and her hope, in uttering words which have been deemed worthy of being preserved to all ages: "I have obtained a man from Jehovah."* It may not appear an extravagant supposition, that the mother of mankind had respect to the promise of a Deliverer which had been certainly, though in obscure terms, intimated to her immediately after the fall.

Whether there were or not any allusion in this instance to the great object of human hope, it cannot reasonably be doubted that the expectation was kept up in the following ages. While in some cases the tradition was aided and preserved pure by patriarchal piety and by new communications from heaven, in other channels it contracted the impurities of fable and polytheism. There is scarcely a people, ancient or modern, barbarous or cultivated, of which we possess any authentic information, whose traditions do not keep up the memory of a primeval period, a *golden age*, in which the virtue and happiness of mankind far exceeded those of the following times. Equally extensive appears to have been the hope cherished of a

* Gen. iv. 1. Some, understanding the particle *וְ* demonstratively, read—"a man the Jehovah." But *וְ* is used in the sense of *וְ* in other places; and all the ancient versions so render it here.

future age, in which vice and misery should be greatly diminished or wholly extirpated, and the interests of the human race advanced to a higher pitch than had been ever attained before.*

By Abulpharaj, an Oriental Christian of the thirteenth century, and by certain Mahometan writers, it has been asserted that the ancient Persians had definite expectations of the Messiah, as the Deliverer from vice and misery, and the Restorer of religion and righteousness: but we cannot repose much confidence in these representations, having no sufficient certainty of the credibility of those prior authorities upon which those writers have made them.†

A more probable, though offensively gross and corrupt, emanation from the primeval expectation of a Divine Saviour, appears in the doctrine of the ancient Hindu books, concerning the *avatars*, or incarnations of *Vishnu*, the second power of the Indian *Trimurti*.‡ “Those incarnations represent the Deity descending in a human shape;

* Besides the well-known passages in Hesiod and Ovid, it appears that the inhabitants of the most inhospitable regions of the earth maintain traditions and expectations of a kind which, though dressed in different imagery, unite in one and the same general signification. See *Knappii Scripta Varii Argumenti*, tom. i. Comm. i. Halæ Sax. 1805: who refers to *Prof. Pallas's Travels through Russia*, vol. i. § 10; and *Steller's Description of Kamptschatka*, p. 272.

† See *Hyde de Religione Vet. Pers.* cap. 31.

‡ See Note [A] at the end of this Chapter.

either to accomplish certain awful and important events, as in the instance of the first three ;—to confound blaspheming vice, to subvert gigantic tyranny, and to avenge oppressed innocence, as in the five following ; or, finally, as in the ninth, to establish a glorious system of benevolent institutions upon the ruins of a gloomy and sanguinary superstition.” * It will not be denied that, under a mass of the most extravagant or puerile fictions, a nucleus of original truth may exist.

Plato represents Socrates as saying ; “ We must wait then, till one shall teach us our duty to the gods and to men.” Alcibiades asks ; “ When, Socrates, will that time come, and who will be that teacher ? Most happy should I be to see this man, whosoever he is.” The sage replies ; “ He is one who is concerned for thee.—He feels for

* *Maurice's Indian Antiq.* vol. v. 91. The more accurate information of M. Dubois makes nine past incarnations, and they are far from being all of the benevolent description which Mr. Maurice has been led, by the earlier and less accurate authorities, to represent. “ The Tenth *Atutara* has not yet taken effect ; but the Hindus trust that it will be realized. They expect it with the same ardour as the Jews look forward to their Messiah. This tenth Avatara is to be the most beneficial and the most wonderful of all. The books which announce it, do not assign the period when it will arrive, nor how it will be brought to pass ; but the Hindus confide that it will restore the *Satya-yuga*, or Age of Happiness.” *Dubois*, p. 436. This is, in Mr. Halhed's manner of expressing the Sanscrit words, the *Suttee Jogue*, or Age of Purity. *Halhed's Code of Gentoo Laws*, pref. p. xxxvi.

thee an admirable regard."* I can perceive no method of accounting for this language, so rational as to suppose that it is the feeble and distant echo of the early tradition, or of the Hebrew revelation.

To that revelation must unquestionably be attributed the rumour mentioned by Tacitus and Suetonius as having extensively prevailed, supported by the uniform voice of antiquity and the sacred writings, that out of Judea those should arise who should possess the empire of the world.† Nor will the impartial reader of the Pollio think the supposition incredible, that its beautiful descriptions were derived, though remotely, from the predictions and the imagery of the Jewish prophets.

To those divine oracles, therefore, as the sources of satisfactory and authoritative information, we shall now attend; with a view to ascertain by a cautious induction what were to be the characters and attributes of the Messiah, according to the descriptions and prophecies of the Old Testament. But it will be necessary to premise a statement of the principles on which we conceive that the application of particular passages may be justly determined to the expected Messiah.

* *Platon. Alcibi. Sec. § 12, 13.*

† *Tacit. Hist. v. 13. Sueton. Vesp. § 4.*

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

CHAP. II.

Note [A] p. 162.

“ The Hindus understand by the word *Trimurti*, the three principal divinities whom they acknowledge; namely, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. It signifies *Three Powers*, because the three essential energies of Creation, Preservation, and Destruction, severally pertain to these three gods.—These three deities are sometimes represented singly, with their peculiar attributes; and sometimes as blended into one body with three heads. It is in this last state that they obtain the name of *Trimurti*.—It must be allowed that the fable of the Trimurti, or of the three principal deities being united in one body, is less consistently supported than any other doctrine in the Hindu books.” The *Abbé Dubois's Description of the Character, Manners, and Institutions of the People of India*. 1817. p. 367, 368. A more ample account is furnished by Mr. Ward, in his admirable work, the *View of the History, Literature, and Religion, of the Hindoos*, vol. i. book i. chap. ii.

CHAP. III.

CRITERIA OF THE APPLICATION OF PASSAGES IN THE OLD
TESTAMENT TO THE MESSIAH.

A distinguished prelate has shewn, with much force of evidence, that the main scope and supreme object of the whole scheme of Old Testament prophecy, is the Great Messiah, his character, his office, and his reign.* Obscurities and difficulties undoubtedly there are in pursuing the details and application of this principle: but they must be met with fairness, and discussed with sober and honest criticism. It pleased the sovereignty and wisdom of God, that his plan of mercy to mankind by a Redeemer should be developed by a long and slow series of representations; and that those representations should be wrought into a continuity with a vast extent of other matter in the history and religious institutions of a particular nation. The plain language of the Christian scriptures is, that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" and that, with respect to the Jewish prophets, "the SPIRIT OF CHRIST, which was in them, testified before of the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that

* *Bp. Hurd's Introd. to the Study of the Prophecies: Serm. ii,*

should follow."* But, however certain is the general principle, and however predominant its influence over all the other parts of the prophetic plan, we cannot arbitrarily assume its application in any given case: evidence must be afforded that the interpretation, in each instance, is the genuine sense and intention of the passage. The principles of such evidence are expressed in the two following rules.

1. Our first criterion is the common rule of all rational interpretation; that *the sense* afforded by a cautious and critical examination of the terms of the passage, and an impartial construction of the whole sentence according to the known usage of the language and the writer, *be such as naturally and justly refers to the MESSIAH*, and cannot, without violence, be applied to any object exclusive of him.†

The application of this criterion will be strengthened in those cases in which the Targumists,‡ or the Jewish commentators of later periods, have admitted a reference to the Messiah. Not that those writers have any claim of authority over our judgment; or that they are entitled to any high regard for the soundness of their understanding, or the correctness of their principles of interpretation; but their testimony

* Rev. xix. 10. 1 Pet. i. 11.

† See Note [A] at the end of this Chapter.

‡ See Note [B] at the end of this Chapter.

is valuable, merely as an historical document, giving us relics of the better knowledge and the purer faith of their remote ancestors.

2. The other criterion is one which, indeed, presupposes the divine authority of the New Testament, and which could not therefore be employed against an advocate of modern Judaism: but, in any controversy between professed Christians, it *ought* to be held unexceptionable; and assuredly, those who have the lowest opinions on the inspiration of the apostolic writings, will not refuse its claim to very respectful regard. This ground of authority is the *sense assumed*, positively *averred*, or manifestly *implied*, by the writers of the *New Testament*, in citations from the *Old*.

It is not without cause that I have expressed myself thus guardedly on this topic; for we have seen that the persons whose leading sentiments are examined in these pages are far from reposing confidence in the judgment and accuracy of the apostles when citing the oracles of God.* These modern teachers have no difficulty in representing themselves as better expositors of the ancient scriptures, than those whom Christ himself had instructed, who possessed "the mind of Christ," whom his spirit was to "lead into all truth," and who declared, appealing to miraculous attestations of their veracity, that he who "despiseth them,

* See pages 24, 25, 56, 58, 67, of this volume.

despiseth not man, but God, who had given to them his Holy Spirit."

It is admitted that the apostles and evangelists have sometimes cited sentences and phrases from the Old Testament, in the way of accommodation to subjects not contemplated in the original design of those passages. To deny this would be to refuse them that liberty of observing striking coincidences, and of making useful applications, which writers of all ages have exercised: and the scriptural books were almost the only literature of the Jews. We should, however, be slow and cautious to admit this solution, and well consider the probability that, in such cases, there may be a ground of appropriation, the inobservance of which is solely owing to our ignorance of some circumstance in the *original* intent of the passage. But when a portion of the ancient "oracles of God" is introduced in the New Testament, explicitly as an assertion of fact or doctrine, or as a prophecy of the event to which it is applied, we must either admit the propriety of the application, to the full extent to which it is carried by the sacred writer, or we must attribute to him mistake or presumption, notwithstanding his professions of inspiration. That the latter part of this alternative differs little from pure deism, it would be needless to remark.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

CHAP. III.

 Note [A] p. 167.

“*Quodsi vel sublimius est in personæ illustris ac beneficii magnitudine describendâ, quàm quod cadat in Judæorum aliquem aut regem, aut prophetam, aut statum, vel alienum à conditione auctoris; tum justum, nedum necessarium, sit id ad augustius Messiae ævum transferri.—Quodsi autem formulas, quibus vates utitur, planè repugnare auctori perspicuè intellectum est; tum maximè Messiae majestatem, facta, animum declarari evincitur.*” “If a prophetic description of the greatness of an illustrious person, and the blessings conferred by him, be more exalted than can belong to any king, or prophet, or any circumstances of the Jews; and if it be clearly foreign to any thing in the situation of the prophet; then it is proper, and even necessary, to consider it as belonging to the more noble dispensation of the Messiah. If it be manifest that the expressions employed by the prophet cannot, with any propriety, be applied to himself or his situation; we are authorized to regard them as declaring the dignity, character, and history of the Messiah.”—*Dæderlein Inst. Theologi Christiani*; vol. ii. p. 178. Norimberg, 1784.

Note [B] p. 167.

The Targums are paraphrastic versions of some parts of the Old Testament, made in the Chaldee language, after the Hebrew had ceased to be vernacular among the Jews. The most ancient of these, in Dean Prideaux's opinion, is that of Onkelos, who is supposed to have been a contemporary of the apostle Paul. It is upon the Pentateuch only, a very close and faithful version, and written with great purity of idiom. The Targum on the Prophets (in the Jewish phrase, including Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel, those of Kings, and the writings usually by us called Prophetical, with the exception of Daniel) is by Jonathan Ben Uzziel, who is generally believed to have flourished in the same age with Onkelos, and many authors maintain that his work was written first. It is more paraphrastic than the former, and has frequent amplifications for the purpose of exposition. Another Targum on the Pentateuch is ascribed to the same Jonathan, but without sufficient authority, and against internal evidence. There is another on select passages of the Pentateuch, written at a later period, and called, from its dialect, the Jerusalem Targum. There are three others on some of the remaining books of the Old Testament, which are believed to have been written after the sixth century of our era, and are in little estimation. For a larger account, see *Prideaux's Connect. of the O. and N. Test.* Part II. Book viii.

CHAP. IV.

ENUMERATION OF PASSAGES IN THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES,
CONCEIVED TO BE DESCRIPTIVE OF THE MESSIAH.

IN this enumeration it is proposed to bring forwards, not every text which has been adduced by biblical interpreters as referring to the Messiah, but only those which, according to the criteria above laid down, carry certain, or, at least, probable evidence of having been so designed. The degrees of that evidence will, of course, be various: but if the passages which appear to be of the least convincing kind be struck out of the following list, still it is apprehended that enough will remain to furnish a satisfactory conclusion. The number might be greatly reduced, without at all diminishing the weight of the argument.

SECTION I.

SEED OF THE WOMAN.

Gen. iii. 15. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: He [*or it,* נָרָא] shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his [*or its,*] heel."*

Nothing can be conceived more congruous with the divine benevolence, than an interposition of mercy and intimation of deliverance, in the circumstances of guilt and horror which belonged to the first parents of mankind, at the hour of their crime and conviction. This passage, in general

* "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy son and her son. He shall call to mind, with respect to thee, what thou didst to him at the beginning: and thou shalt keep a watch upon him to the end." *Targ. Onkelos.*
 "—— between the seed of thy son and the seed of her sons: and it shall be, that when the sons of the woman shall be observant of the commandments of the law, they shall use effort, and shall smite thee on thy head: and when they shall forsake the commandments of the law, thou shalt use effort, and and shalt strike them on their heel. But yet, to them there shall be a remedy, but to thee no remedy shall be: and they shall be prepared to apply a remedy [*literally a bruising, i. e. a composition of bruised medicinal substances,*] to their heel in the days of the King MESSIAH." *Targ. Jonath.* The Jerusalem is substantially the same.

and figurative, but intelligible terms, reveals such a merciful intention. Two of the Targums, or ancient Jewish paraphrases, understand the word "seed" in its collective sense, denoting the general posterity of Eve; yet the fulfilment of the promise they expressly refer to "the days of the King Messiah." But the final clause seems to require the word to be taken in the individual sense. The passage is not cited in the New Testament; but from the appeals of Jesus himself to the testimonies of Moses,* it is reasonable to expect a more considerable number of passages in the Pentateuch referring to the Messiah, than the very few which are specified in the evangelical records. There may be an allusion to it in the expression of Paul: "God sent forth his son, made of a woman."†

Admitting this passage to have the design which Christians in general attribute to it, and which perhaps the greater number of impartial thinkers will deem reasonable and suited to the occasion, it will supply these characters of the Messiah: that he should be *a human being*, in a peculiar sense *the offspring of the female*; and that, though previously a partial sufferer by the evil and malignant power, he should, in the end, completely conquer it.‡

* John v. 46. Luke xxiv. 44.

† Gal. iv. 4.

‡ The reader will be gratified by the curious and striking train of observations on this text, in Bishop Horsley's Sermons, vol. ii. p. 38—54.

SECT. II.

MAN FROM JEHOVAH.

Gen. iv. 1. "I have obtained a man from Jehovah."

FROM the special record of this exclamation of Eve on the birth of her first son, and from the importance which is thus given to it, it may reasonably be considered as the expression of her mistaken expectation that the promise (ch. iii. 15) was beginning to be accomplished. Some, taking *מן* as a demonstrative and emphatic particle, render it,—“a man, even Jehovah.”* But, though this is the proper and most common sense of *מן*, it is also used as a preposition. No certainty, therefore, could be pleaded for this interpretation. All that we infer from the passage is, that Eve, and of course Adam, expected the Deliverer to be a human being.

† Cocceii Lex. Hebr. in voc. *מן*.

SECT. III.

GIVER OF REST.

Gen. v. 28, 29. "And he called his name Noah [*i. e.* Repose], "saying, This shall console us from our toil, and from the "pain of our labours [*Heb.* hands], from the ground which "Jehovah hath cursed."

LAMECH, worn down with toils and griefs, and having, from some cause unknown to us, the idea that his child was destined to an extraordinary station in the economy of providence, expresses a fond hope that the child would prove the promised Deliverer from the sorrows of the world, the curse denounced on the fall of our first parents. If the words be admitted to have any reference to the great object of expectation, we can infer only that the patriarchs looked for him as a human being, one of their own descendants, who should deliver them from the sufferings which the first sin had induced.

SECT. IV.

DESCENDANT OF ABRAHAM.

Gen. xxii. 18. "And in thy SEED all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."

THIS distinguished promise was several times given to Abraham, and was solemnly repeated to Isaac and to Jacob as the capital article of their family inheritance. It is also quoted in the New Testament with an explicit application to the Messiah.* Some have objected, that the term "seed" denotes a collective posterity, and not an individual. It is sufficient to reply, that, in the Jewish idiom, the term was used in the latter sense;† that the ancient Jews applied it to the Messiah;‡ and that neither to the Jewish nation at any period of its history, nor to any individual of that nation, except Jesus Christ, can this divine

* Gal. iii. 16.

† See Gen. iv. 25. xxi. 13. The Targum on Ps. xviii. 26, says, understanding the declaration to relate to Abraham, 'with his seed which is Isaac.' The LXX. translate בן son, in Deut. xxv. 5. by σπέρμα, seed.

‡ In three passages quoted by Wetstein, from the *Bereshith Rabba* and *Ruth Rabba*, the singular זרע seed, put to denote a son, is affirmed to signify "the King Messiah." *Wetstenii N. T.* tom. ii. in Gal. iii. 16.

declaration be with any plausibility applied. There is no just and extensive sense, in which either the Jewish nation generally, or Moses, David, or any other prince or prophet of that people, can be said to have been a *blessing* to all other nations; if we exclude any reference to Him who “came of them, with regard to the flesh.” The only conclusion that can be drawn from this text, with relation to our present inquiry, is that the Messiah should be a man, of the posterity of Abraham, and the instrument of extensive benefits to the world at large. What extent of knowledge Abraham might have of the Messiah, we have not the means of knowing. We are assured that, in some manner which Jesus plainly represents as distinguished and important,* he “saw the day of the Messiah, and rejoiced.” It is not improbable that the striking scene of his anticipated sacrifice of his son was a lesson, as well as a trial, to his faith: and it may reasonably be supposed that, in the divine communication which was immediately after made to him, and of which the passage before us is a part, some more extended information might be afforded, to gladden the heart of the father and pattern of believers with a prophetic view of his great Descendant, who was to be “manifested, at the close of the ages, for the putting away of sin, by the sacrifice of himself;” and in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, since “he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.”

* John viii. 56—58.

SECT. V.

THE SHILOH.

Gen. xlix. 10. "A sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor
"a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh shall come; and
"to him [shall be] the homage of nations."

THE application of this passage to the Messiah rests upon the evident impossibility of assigning any event correspondent with the terms, except the cessation of a native government in Judæa on the deposition of Archelaus, and the admission of the gentiles to the blessings of the Messiah's reign.*

Difficulty rests on the interpretation of the principal term in the text. *Shiloh* may be an appellative, and then it most probably denotes *The Pacificator*: or, it may be a pronominal compound† denoting HE *whose it is*, that is regal and legislative authority.

The gracious and munificent reign of the Messiah is here affirmed, but nothing certain can be concluded from it with respect to his person.

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

† See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. V.

Note [A] p. 179.

Some of the German infidel critics (assuming very modestly that this, which is expressly declared (v. 1.) to be the dying farewell and prophetic monition of Jacob, is a composition of the age of David), interpret *Shiloh* as the name of the town so called near the mountains of Ephraim, and render the clause—"till he come to Shiloh."—"The tribe of Judah, which had occupied the chief place in the marches and encampments in the wilderness, shall not lay aside that honour till the tribes shall disperse from the common standard, each to its own allotment; which dispersion shall take place in Shiloh." See Josh. xviii. and xxii. —To this interpretation the following objections occur. (1.) The terms of the passage do not accord with any facts in the march through the desert, or the occupation of Canaan. Judah possessed no more authority than any other tribe. The *sceptre* and *legislation* were in the hands of Moses, a Levite, and the subsequent command was conferred on Joshua, an Ephraimite. To translate *קְנָן* (*a lawgiver*) by *a banner*, as attempted, does not materially alter the case; but such a rendering would ill suit other passages where the word occurs, particularly Is. xxxii. 22. (2.) The standard of Judah had departed from the army *before* the transaction at Shiloh: see Josh. xv. (3.) On the hypothesis assumed, that the passage was written *ex post facto*, the writer

would naturally have used terms descriptive of the greatest splendour of the tribe of Judah, the reign of David, or, had he lived to see it, that of Solomon. (4.) The clause,—“to him shall be the homage [or expectation] of nations,”—is left without any corresponding circumstance whatever.

So much space would not have been given to this insipid topic, but from the wish to exhibit a specimen of that noxious pseudo-criticism whose characters are vaunting arrogance and manifest irreligion, employing a prodigious machinery of perverted learning to compress all in the scriptures that is most solemn and important, into insignificance and nullity.

Note [B] p. 179.

Reading מלך with the Samaritan Pentateuch and Version, many Hebrew MSS. and all the most valuable and ancient versions.—“The Messiah, whose is the kingdom.” Targum of Onkelos. “The King Messiah, whose is the kingdom.” Jerusalem Targum. “He whose it is.” Syr. and Arab. “He for whom it is reserved.” Aquila and Symmachus. “The things reserved for him.” Septuagint. The Bereshith Rabba (a Rabbinical collection of explications of Genesis, attributed to the fifth century) repeatedly affirms this passage to belong to the Messiah: and the *Zohar*, a more ancient work, the substance of which is attributed on good grounds to the second century, or rather to the first, (as, like Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* of Socrates, it is principally a recital of the expositions and doctrines of Rabbi Simeon, the son of Jochai, who was contemporary with the apostles), says, on Gen. xlvii. 31. “He [Jacob] worshipped, because the Messiah was to come at the end of the days, and the Shechinah was to dwell with them.” Ap. *Schettgenii Hor. Hebr. et Talm.* tom. ii. 450.

The learned Dr. William Hales, late Prof. of Orient. Lang. in Trin. Coll. Dublin, proposes to read מלך, on the authority of the Vulgate; *the one sent, the Apostle*, John xviii. 3. Heb. iii. 1. Certainly the conjecture is not violent, of an early and undesigned change of מ into מל, but the weight of authority is against it. *Analysis of Chronol.* vol. ii. p. 173.

SECT. VI.

THE PROPHET LIKE TO MOSES.

Deut. xviii. 18, 19. “ A prophet will I raise up unto them, “ from among their brethren, like unto thee ; and I will put my “ words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I “ shall command him : and it shall be, that the man who will not “ hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I “ will require of him” [for his disobedience.]

THOSE who have interpreted this divine promise, as referring to the succession of the inspired prophets in Israel and Judah, or to any one among them, must have overlooked the principal circumstance in the description, the *likeness to Moses*. Not one of the Jewish prophets was a LEGISLATOR, not even David, though a king as well as a prophet ; for the kingly office in Judea was, by divine constitution, purely executive. The law which Jehovah had given allowed of neither addition nor diminution. Jesus of Nazareth is the only Jewish prophet who has been, like Moses, the Founder of a new law. It was predicted of the Messiah that, under his reign, the Levitical observances should cease ; and, of course, the whole authority of that law would then be abolished.*

* Isa. lxvi. 18, 21. Jer. iii. 16, 17. xxxi. 31—34.

But those with whom apostolic authority is conclusive, can have no doubt of the application of this passage.*

The conclusions to be obviously drawn from it are, that the Messiah should be a man, a descendant of Israel, a prophet of the highest order, and a divinely authorized lawgiver.

* Acts iii. 22.

SECT. VII.

THE ADAM FROM ABOVE.

2 Sam. vii. 18, 19. “——What am I, O Lord Jehovah, and
 “ what my house, that thou hast brought me to this point [of ex-
 “ altation]! And little [is] even this in thine eyes, O Lord Je-
 “ hovah : thou hast even spoken, with respect to the house of thy
 “ servant, unto a vast extent ! And this [is] the law * of the Adam,
 “ O Lord Jehovah !”——The parallel recital in 1 Chron. xvii. 16,
 17, reads the last clause ; “——Thou hast regarded me ac-
 “ cording to the order* of the Adam from above, [or, the pre-emi-
 “ nent,] O Jehovah God !”

ON the interpretation of this important passage, and its application to the Messiah, the reader will be gratified in seeing the sentiments of the laborious and learned Dr. Kennicott. I have no fear of being blamed for inserting a citation of such length, considering its interesting nature, and the scarcity of the books from which it is taken.†

The inferences to be drawn from this passage are, that the Messiah would, at a period remotely future, descend from David, and that he would

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

† See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

sustain a relation to the human race analogous to that of the first man. Perhaps it must remain a matter of doubt, whether *המעלה* is to be rendered, by taking the *מ* as a preposition, which will effect the sense “from on high;” or as a preformant, then signifying “the person of exaltation, or eminence.” The latter is supported by the majority of authorities: but the former has the recommendation of coinciding with the character of the Messiah repeatedly laid down in the New Testament, that he should be “from above, and above all, the second man, the Lord from heaven.”*

* Joh. iii. 31. viii. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47. The very expression occurs in the *Zohar*. See the note on Gen. xlix. 10. In it the Messiah is called *אדם לעילא* *the Adam on high*, and is said to have dominion over all things, as the first man, the *Adam below* (*אדם תתאה*) had by divine appointment over the inferior creation of this world. *Zohar in Gen.* ap. Schoettg. Hor. Hebr. et Talm. tom. ii. 271.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. VII.

 Note [A] p. 184.

There can be no reasonable doubt that חֲוִית in the former passage, and חֲוִי in the latter, are the same term; whether we suppose, that in the latter instance a final ה or ח has been absorbed by the succeeding ה; or, with Schmidt, Clodius, and J. H. Michaelis, that the two are merely different forms of the same word, having the same radical idea, *order, succession, regulation*. The ancient versions seem to have generally overlooked the true sense of the terms and the scope of the passage; which is no cause of surprize, if it be considered that the oldest of them were made in the corrupt periods of the Jewish state, and that the more recent are imitators of the former. 2 Sam. vii. 19. "This is a vision for the sons of men." *Targ. Jon.* "This is an instruction for man." *Syr.* "This is a prediction relating to man." *Arab.* All these have rendered חֲוִי by חֲוִי.—"This is the law of the man." *Lxx.* "This is the law of the Adam." *Vulg.*—1 Chron. xvii. 17.—"All the children of men who reverentially worship thee with all their hearts, dost thou bring out of darkness into light, O Lord of Lords!" *Syr.* "Thou hast looked upon me, as a vision of man, and hast exalted me, O Lord God!" *Lxx.* The *Arabic* unites both these interpretations, or rather paraphrases. "Thou hast made me honourable above all men, O Lord God!" *Vulg.*

Note [B] p. 184.

“The New Testament begins with asserting, that Jesus Christ was the son of David, the son of Abraham. As to the descent of Christ from Abraham, every one knows that Christ was born a Jew, and consequently descended from Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. And we all know, that the promise given to Abraham concerning the Messiah is recorded in the history of Abraham's life: in Gen. xxii. 18. Christ being also to descend from David, there can be no doubt, but that this promise, as made to David, was recorded likewise in the history of David. 'Tis remarkable, that David's life is given more at large than that of any other person in the Old Testament; and it cannot be supposed that the historian omitted to record that promise, which was more honourable to David than any other circumstance. The record of this promise, if written at all, must have been written in this chapter: in the message from God by Nathan to David, which is here inserted. Here (I am fully persuaded) the promise was, and still is, recorded; and the chief reason why our divines have so frequently missed it, or been so much perplexed about it, is owing to our very improper translation of the 10th and 14th verses.

“This wrong translation, in a part of scripture so very interesting, has been artfully laid hold of, and expatiated upon splendidly, by the deistical author of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion; who pretends to demonstrate, that the promise of a Messiah could not be here recorded. His reasons (hitherto I believe unanswered) are three;—1st. because, in ver. 10, the prophet speaks of the future prosperity of the Jews, as to be afterwards fixed, and no more afflicted; which circumstances are totally repugnant to the fate of the Jews, as connected with the birth and death of Christ.—2dly. because the son, here promised, was (ver. 13) to build an house; which house, it is pretended, must mean the temple of Solomon; and of course Solomon must be the son here promised.—and 3dly. because verse 14 supposes, that this son might commit iniquity, which could not be supposed of the Messiah. The first of these objections is founded on our wrong translation of verse 10, where the words should be expressed as relating to the time past or

present. For the prophet is there declaring what great things God had already done for David and his people—that he had raised David from the sheepfold to the throne—and that he had planted the Israelites in a place of safety; at rest from all those enemies who had so often before afflicted them. That the verbs *ושמתי* and *ונטעתי* may be rendered in the time past or the present, is allowed by our own translators; who here (ver. 11) render *והניחותי* ‘and have caused thee to rest,’ and also render *והגיד* ‘and telleth:’ which construction, made necessary here by the context, might be confirmed by other proofs almost innumerable. The translation therefore should run thus: ‘I took thee from the sheepcote—and have made thee a great name—and I have appointed a place for my people Israel; and have planted them, that they dwell in a place of their own, and move no more. Neither do the children of wickedness afflict them any more; as before time, and as since the time that I commanded judges to be over Israel: and I have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies.’

“Objection the 2d is founded on a mistake in the sense. David indeed had proposed to build an house to God, which God did not admit. Yet, approving the piety of David’s intention, God was pleased to reward it by promising—that He would make an house for David; which house, to be thus erected by God, was certainly not material, or made of stones, but a spiritual house, or family, to be raised up for the honour of God and the salvation of mankind. And this house, which God would make, was to be built by David’s seed; and this seed was to be raised up after David slept with his fathers: which words clearly exclude Solomon, who was set up, and placed upon the throne, before David was dead. This building, promised by God, was to be erected by one of David’s descendants, who was also to be an everlasting King: and indeed the house, and the kingdom, were both of them to be established for ever. Now that this house, or spiritual building, was to be set up, together with a kingdom, by the Messiah, is clear from Zechariah, who very emphatically says, (vi. 12, 13) ‘Behold the man, whose name is the Branch—he shall build the temple of the Lord. Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne,’ &c. Observe also the language of the New Testament. In 1 Corinth. iii. 9—17, St. Paul says—

‘Ye are God’s building—Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God?—the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.’ And the author of the epistle to the Hebrews seems to have his eye upon this very promise in Samuel, concerning a son to David, and of the house which he should build, when he says, (3—6) ‘Christ, as a son, over his own house; whose house are we.’

“As to the 3d and greatest difficulty, that also may be removed, by a more just translation of verse 14: for the Heb. words do not properly signify what they are now made to speak. ’Tis certain that the principal word *בְּחַטֹּאתָו* is not the active infinitive of Kal, which would be *בַּחֲטֹאתָו*; but *חָטָא* from *עָוָה* is in Niphal, as *חָגְלוּתָו* from *גָּלָה*. ’Tis also certain, that a verb, which in the active voice signifies to commit iniquity, may in the passive signify to suffer for iniquity: and hence it is, that nouns from such verbs sometimes signify iniquity, sometimes punishment. See Lowth’s Isaiah, p. 187; with many other authorities. The way being thus made clear, we are now prepared for abolishing our translation—‘if he commit iniquity;’ and also for adopting the true one—‘even in his suffering for iniquity.’ The Messiah, who is thus the person possibly here spoken of, will be made still more manifest from the whole verse thus translated. ‘I will be his father, and he shall be my son: even in his suffering for iniquity, I shall chasten him with the rod of men (with the rod due to men) and with the stripes (due to) the children of Adam.’ And this construction is well supported by Isaiah liii. 4 and 5—‘he hath carried our sorrows (*i. e.* the sorrows due to us, and which we must otherwise have suffered)—he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.’ See note p. 479, in Hallet, on Heb. 11, 26. Thus then God declares himself the father of the son here meant;* and promises, that, even amidst the sufferings of this son (as they would be for the sins of others, not for his own) his mercy should still attend him: nor should his favour be ever removed from this king, as it had been from Saul. And thus (as it follows) ‘thine house (O David) and thy kingdom, shall (in Messiah) be established for ever, before me (before God): thy throne shall be established for ever.’ Thus the angel, de-

* See also Heb. i. 5.

livering his message to the virgin-mother (Luk. i. 32, 33) speaks, as if he was quoting from this very prophecy—‘ The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David ; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever : and of his kingdom there shall be no end.’ In ver. 16, לְפָנַי is here rendered as לְפָנַי ; on the authority of one Heb. MS. with the Gr. and Syr. versions ; and indeed nothing could be established for ever, in the presence of David, but in the presence of God only. So Dr. S. Clarke.

“ Having thus shewn, that the words fairly admit here the promise made to David, that from his seed should arise Messiah, the everlasting King, it may be necessary to add—that, if the Messiah be the person here meant, as suffering innocently for the sins of others, Solomon cannot be ; nor can this be a prophecy admitting such double sense, or be applied properly to two such opposite characters. ‘ Of whom speaketh the prophet this ? of himself, or of some other man ?’—This was a question properly put by the Ethiopian treasurer (Acts viii. 34) who never dreamt that such a description as he was reading could relate to different persons : and Philip shews him, that the person was Jesus only. So here, it may be asked—Of whom speaketh the prophet this ? of Solomon, or of Christ ? It must be answered, of Christ : one reason is, because the description does not agree to Solomon ; and therefore Solomon, being necessarily excluded in a single sense, must also be excluded in a double. Lastly : if it would be universally held absurd, to consider the promise of Messiah made to Abraham, as relating to any other person besides Messiah ; why is there not an equal absurdity, in giving a double sense to the promise of Messiah thus made to David ?

“ Next to our present very improper translation, the cause of the common confusion here has been—not distinguishing the promise here made, as to Messiah alone, from another made as to Solomon alone : the 1st brought by Nathan, the 2d by Gad ; the 1st near the beginning of David’s reign, the 2d near the end of it ; the 1st, relating to Messiah’s spiritual kingdom, everlasting without conditions ; the 2d, relating to the fate of the temporal kingdom of Solomon, and his heirs, depending entirely on their obedience or rebellion. 1 Chron. xxii. 8—13

and 28, 7. Let the first message be compared with this second in 1 Chron. xxii. 8—13 : which the Syr. version (at ver. 8) tells us, was delivered by a prophet, and the Arab. says, by the prophet Gad. This 2d message was after David's many wars, when he had shed much blood ; and it was this second message, that, out of all David's sons, appointed Solomon to be his successor. At the time of the 1st message Solomon was not born ; it being delivered soon after David became king at Jerusalem : but Solomon was born, at the time of this 2d message. For though our translation very wrongly says (1 Chron. xxii. 9)—‘ a son shall be born to thee, and his name shall be Solomon ;’ yet the Heb. text expressly speaks of him as then born—‘ Behold, a son (נולד *natus est*) is born to thee : and therefore the words following must be rendered, ‘ Solomon is his name, and I will give peace in his days : he shall build an house for my name,’ &c.

“ From David's address to God, after receiving the message by Nathan, 'tis plain that David understood the son promised to be the the Messiah ; in whom his house was to be established for ever. But the words, which seem most expressive of this, are in this verse now rendered very unintelligibly, ‘ and is this the manner of man ?’ Whereas the words *והאם תורה האדם* literally signify, ‘ and this is (or must be) the law of the man, or of the Adam,’ *i. e.* this promise must relate to the law, or ordinance, made by God to Adam, concerning the seed of the woman ; the man, or the second Adam : as the Messiah is expressly called by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 45—47. This meaning will be yet more evident from the parallel place, 1 Chron. xvii. 17, where the words of David are now miserably rendered thus : ‘ And thou hast regarded me, according to the estate of a man of high degree.’ Whereas the words *וראיתני כתור האדם המעלה* literally signify, ‘ and thou hast regarded me, according to the Adam that is future, or the man that is from above,’ (for the word *המעלה* very remarkably signifies *hereafter* as to time, and *from above* as to place) ; and thus St. Paul, including both senses, ‘ The second man is the Lord from heaven :’ and, Adam is the figure of him that was to come, or the future. Rom. v. 14”.—*Kennicott's [Posthumous] Remarks on the O. T.* p. 108—115.

SECT. VIII.

SUCCESSOR OF DAVID; EVERLASTING KING; JEHOVAH.

2 Sam. xxiii. 1—7. Dr. KENNICOTT's translation.

TITLE.

Now these are the last words of David.

PROEM.

The oracle of David, the son of Jesse;
 Even the oracle of the man raised up on high:
 The anointed of the God of Jacob;
 And the composer of the psalms of Israel.
 The spirit of Jehovah speaketh by me;
 And his word is upon my tongue:
 Jehovah, the God of Israel, sayeth;
 To me speaketh the rock of Israel.

SONG.

The Just One ruleth among men!
 He ruleth by the fear of God!
 As the light of the morning, ariseth Jehovah;
 A sun, without clouds, for brightness;
 And as the grass from the earth, after rain.
 Verily thus is my house with God;
 For an everlasting covenant hath he made with me,
 Ordered in all things and safely secured:
 For he is all my salvation, and all my desire.
 But the sons of Belial shall not flourish;

As a thorn rooted up, shall be all of them :

For they will not be taken kindly by the hand.

And the Man, who shall reprove them,

Shall be filled with iron, and a wooden spear :

But in the fire shall they be utterly burnt, with ignominy.

THE evidence in favour of this amended version is to me sufficiently satisfactory to authorise its admittance.* It plainly bears the characters of a grand and definite prediction, suiting the character and circumstances of the dying prophet, who “ KNEW that God had sworn to him with an oath, of the fruit of his body to place upon his throne” a GREAT SUCCESSOR, whose throne should be established for ever. This future Personage is here described, in accordance with the other prophetic scriptures and the language of the New Testament, as a gracious and beneficent Sovereign, the Holy and Just One,† the Hope and the Salvation of the saints,‡ the persecuted and crucified man, the Sun of righteousness,§ yea, JEHOVAH himself.

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

† See Acts iii. 14. vii. 52. xxii. 14. James v. 6.

‡ Haggai ii. 7. Is. xlix. 6. § Mal. ~~iii.~~ ^{iv.} 20.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

SECT. VIII.

Note [A] p. 193.

It is to be regretted that Dr. Kennicott's "Critical Appendix," for which he reserved the "Notes which might be necessary in support of the alterations here proposed," was never published. Perhaps, however, the following extracts will go a considerable way towards supplying the defect, after premising two or three remarks.

The manuscript to which Dr. K. attributes so high an authority, is his No. 1. It is in the Bodleian library, numbered *Laud. A.* 172 and 162, two volumes in folio, on vellum, and in the Spanish kind of character. Its marks of high antiquity are numerous and decisive. Its text was certainly formed before the Masoretic revision, from which (as exhibited in Vanderhooght's Bible) it differs no fewer than *fourteen thousand* times, of which instances a very great multitude agree with the ancient versions, and, in the Pentateuch, with the Samaritan copy. Dr. K. moderately estimated its date to be in the middle or early part of the tenth century.

V. 1. I do not perceive the reason of rendering נעים ומרות *composer of the psalms*: its literal meaning is *delightful in the psalms*. V. 3. JEHOVAH is added on the authority of several early printed editions, Kennicott's MS. 253, written A. D. 1495, and de Rossi's 579, which is about a century older. V. 4. See

the extracts below. V. 5. *כֵּן כִּלְכִּל* *verily thus*, is the reading of Kennicott's 252, a MS. which he assigns to the close of the thirteenth century; and it is strongly confirmed by the Targum. Join the latter clause of v. 5. with the first word of v. 6. *כֵּן כִּלְכִּל* retracting the *ו* so that, as a noun of multitude, or by ellipsis of *בְּנֵי*, the word may be construed with the plural verb. This the evident sense requires, and it is confirmed by the Targum, Lxx. Syr. and Ar. V. 7. *Accost* would be more exact than either *touch* or *reprove*. *בְּשֶׁבַח* *in their abode*; or *with quietness*, Syr. and Ar. q. d. *they shall lie in utter helplessness before the irresistible vengeance*. Dr. K's. *with ignominy* is a clearer sense; but I do not perceive how it is elicited from the word: it seems to have been suggested by the Lxx. whose text, however, is here extremely perplexed and probably corrupt.—We now adduce the elucidations from Dr. Kennicott's *General Preliminary Dissertation*, prefixed to his magnificent Hebrew Bible; and from his posthumous *Remarks* before mentioned.

“Variantem habet hic codex”—&c. “This MS. has a various reading, hitherto found in no other, and of so much importance as to require a brief explanation, though it cannot yet be fully treated. No part whatever of the O. T. is introduced with a greater majesty of language, or more excites the expectation of some splendid and glorious sense, than the LAST WORDS OF DAVID, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1—7; but this expectation is completely disappointed, and very many of the terms and expressions are involved in the thickest obscurity, so that the *principal subject*, the hinge on which the whole must turn, cannot be made out. But, on this highly important reading, I am happy to refer to the sentiments of a distinguished critic, M. Michaelis, whom none will suspect of a prepossession which might possibly be imputed to me. I first communicated this reading to the learned world in 1753; and the *Göttingen Review of New Books*, No. ix. p. 26, 27, had the following observations on the obscurity of the passage, and the value of the emendation. ‘Inconsiderable as these researches may appear to some, their utility in vindicating the sacred history from the cavils of objectors may appear from the following instance of a new and valuable reading in a very difficult passage. That the

last words of David labour under some corruptions, it is scarcely possible to doubt, when the whole band of translators and commentators, after the most laborious and anxious investigation, and with all the aid of Arabic and Syriac, as well as Hebrew, literature, have not been able to arrive at any certainty. Whatever sense can be extracted from the words, is incoherent; and even the scope or object of the passage does not appear. In this difficult poem we read

וְכִמְאוֹר בֶּכֶר יוֹרָא שֶׁמֶשׁ

and as the light of the morning the sun shall arise, or, and about the time of the morning light the sun shall arise; either way very insipid. Who would compare the sun with the light of the morning, that is, with the sun himself? Or what genuine poet would say, that the sun arose in the morning when it shone forth? It is, therefore, a happy circumstance, and auspicious to the cause of Christianity, that the oldest of Dr. K.'s manuscripts hitherto examined, has יוֹרָא before שֶׁמֶשׁ, giving the clause, *and as the light of the morning shall JEHOVAH arise, a sun.*—The Lxx. amidst the greatest perplexity and confusion of both words and clauses, yet sufficiently shews that the Greek translator in this very place had the *name of God* in his copy, but which has been long absent from the common text. Dr. K. believes that he has brought to light a prophecy of the MESSIAH; a discovery worthy of our congratulations, and which we shall be happy to see more fully established.'—*Kennic. Dissertio Generalis*, p. 71.

“The great point is, to fix and ascertain the subject: whether it be—the celebration of a good and righteous Governor, in general; or, in particular, that righteous and just one, the Messiah. In favour of this latter sense, new evidence has arisen from an investigation of the Heb. MSS. the oldest and best of which has preserved the word JEHOVAH, in one part of this hymn; where, if the word be genuine, it solves the chief difficulty.

“I therefore presume, that the subject of this sacred song, composed near the close of David's life, is the Messiah: and certainly no other subject was so worthy to employ the last poetry of the ‘man after God's own heart.’ He labours to introduce it with an accumulation of all such expressions as would

command the greatest attention to what he was about to deliver, as he was king, and as he was prophet. That a good ruler, in the general, should be here treated of, seems impossible: not only from the introductory pomp and splendour, but also from the subsequent particulars being inapplicable to any king or ruler, but Messiah. The everlasting covenant, concerning this son of David, is expressly mentioned; as well as the spiritual nature of his kingdom. All the particulars agree to the Messiah: and while some describe the fate of his enemies, others are descriptive of his own crucifixion; all very similar in sense to what is foretold elsewhere. We read in Psal. xxii. 'they pierced my hands and my feet: they parted my garments, and cast lots upon my vesture.' And if David was thus circumstantial in *that* Psalm, why may he not have mentioned here the same or other circumstances, relative to the same event? 'Tis no just objection, that this song is not quoted in the New Testament; for the New Test. does not quote the other words, 'they pierced my hands and my feet.' And should it be objected further, that nothing of this interesting nature appears, at present, in these last words: I reply, that nothing clear appears at all; not only no consistent plan, but not even common sense is to be made out of the words in our present version. If therefore, by the assistance of Heb. MSS. and a better Eng. version, this passage shall be found to contain a consistent prophecy of the Messiah, we cannot but be particularly struck with the mention made here of the iron and the spear. With spikes of iron was he to be filled; as he was fastened to the cross by these, at the opposite extremities of his body, his hands and his feet: and with the spear was his side pierced. So that if, with the apostle, who at first doubted, we should at last see here the print of the nails, and the wound made by the spear, let us, like that apostle, be no longer faithless, but believing."—*Kennic. Rem.* p. 125—128.

The Lxx. rendering of this passage could not have been brought into so confused, unintelligible, and apparently inextricable a condition, without having suffered much corruption, from accident or from design. The Alexandrine copy differs from the Vatican, but this character applies to each. In v. 4. as Michaelis observes, the word *God*, and in the Vatican *God* and afterwards

Lord, occur; whereas the present Hebrew text has neither of those terms.

The Targum of Jonathan is deserving of being transcribed, on a part of this passage, as an interesting proof that the ancient Jews regarded it as certainly referring to the Messiah; and that, in so applying it, they attributed to Him the express characters of Deity. "The God of Israel spake with respect to me; the Rock of Israel, the Sovereign of the sons of men, the true Judge, hath spoken to appoint me king; for HE is the Messiah that shall be, who shall arise and rule in the fear of the Lord."—The paraphrast applies the rest of the passage to the happiness of the righteous under the glory of that "future Sun," and the excision of the wicked, "not by the hand of man," but "when HE shall sit upon the throne of judgment, to judge the world."

SECT. IX.

THE REDEEMER, THE LIVING ONE.

Job xix. 23—27.

1. "O that, even now, my words were recorded !
"O that they were written in a memorial !
"With an iron point and lead !
"That they were engraven, for perpetuity, on a rock !
5. "I surely do know my REDEEMER, the LIVING ONE :
"And He, the LAST, will arise over the dust.
"And, after the disease has cut down my skin,
"Even from my flesh I shall see God :
"Whom I shall see on my behalf ;
10. "And mine eyes shall behold Him, and not estranged.
"The thoughts of my bosom are accomplished !"

It has been the fashion with a class of interpreters and divines, pleased perhaps to associate their own with the celebrated names of Grotius, le Clerc, and Warburton, to explode from this passage any reference to a future life, or the expectation of the Messiah ; and no slight contempt has been expressed for the credulity and mental servitude (very candidly taken for granted) of those who entertain the belief of such a reference. This has, however, been the opinion of the greater

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

number of scripture critics, ancient and modern, Popish and Protestant. The usual objections against this interpretation are, that no vestiges appear in the book of Job of any acquaintance with the doctrine of a future life; that it would be very extraordinary, if there really existed in the mind of the composer of this book, any knowledge of the Redeemer to come, that such a glorious hope should shew itself no where but in this single passage; that we cannot reconcile such an avowal with the despondency which appears to have prevailed in the mind of Job; and that the terms employed do not necessarily import more than the persuasion of a deliverance, by divine goodness, from the present calamity, and a restoration to health and happiness, in the present life. To these reasonings we reply:

1. Admitting that there is no intimation of the doctrine of immortality and a future judgment, or of the expectation of a Messiah, in any other part of this book, the consequence does not follow. It should be recollected that, in a poetical book, the matter is disposed considerably according to the taste and choice of the writer; and that a more vivid impression might be made, by presenting a capital circumstance with its brightness and force collected into one point, than would be produced if it were dispersed through the general composition. The whole texture of this passage, introduced with the most empassioned wish for attention and perpetual remembrance, and sus-

tained in the sublimest style of utterance, is evidently thus contrived to interest and impress in the highest degree.

Those of our objectors who ascribe the date of the poem to the period of the captivity, cannot refuse to admit that the writer possessed whatever knowledge the Jewish nation had with respect to a Messiah and a future state. The writings of Moses and the former prophets, and the greater part of the works of the latter prophets, and the books grouped with the Psalms, were, at this time, the accredited scriptures of the Jews: and few will be so hardy as to affirm that no intimations occur in those writings of the doctrines which constituted the hope and consolation of Israel. On this (in my opinion, untenable) hypothesis, it would appear highly credible that some very distinct reference to those doctrines would enter materially into the structure of the work.

2. The alleged inconsistency between these expressions of triumphant confidence, as we understand them, and the gloominess and despondency generally prevalent in the speeches of Job, presses equally on our opponents, who confine the passage to the expectation of restored prosperity in the present life. It lies even more against them, for Job, not only before, but in his very last speech,* *evidently despaired of a restoration to temporal felicity.* But, on either hypothesis, there is

* See chap. xxx. 16—23.

no inconsistency. A man must have little judgment and less taste, who does not perceive in these alternations of faith and diffidence, despair and hope, a picture exquisitely just and touching, of the human mind, under the influence of the most agitating conflict between religious principle resting on the belief of invisible existences, and, on the other hand, the dictates of sense, the pressure of misery, and the violence of temptations.*

3. But we are not disposed to grant either of the assumptions before mentioned. We have better evidence than the *dicta* of German "anti-supernaturalists," or the opinions of English refiners upon theology, that the patriarchs from whom the tradition of divine truths had descended to Job, "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and desired a better country, that is, a heavenly."† Nor is it credible that the promise of a Messiah was totally unknown to the true worshippers of Jehovah in Arabia, allied to the family of Abraham, and in the habit of reverentially cherishing the remains of primeval truth. And, besides the possession of the patriarchal religion, what is there to prevent any but a deist from conceiving that God might INSPIRE his faithful and afflicted servant with the knowledge and the joyful confidence which he expresses? Is not such a supposition consonant with all the known scheme and principles of the

* See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

† See Heb. xi. 5—16.

divine dispensations? Was not the occasion worthy of the interposition? Has it not always been the faith of the Jewish and of the Christian church, that the *ultimate sentiments* which it is the design of the book of Job to support and illustrate, and which, in the sequel of the book, receive the stamp of divine approbation, form a part of the body of REVEALED TRUTH? There are also many passages in the book which may be rationally urged as recognitions of a future state.*

4. The assertion that the terms of the passage do not import so much as is usually attributed to them, may be fairly enough met by asserting the contrary. To the unlearned reader, as well as to the critical scholar, the means of judging for himself are industriously presented, in the close version given above, and in the remarks and references subjoined. The words are as plain as, in any instance, the language of prophecy can be expected to be. It appears to me strictly rational, probable, and in harmony with the great plan of a progressive revelation, to regard this remarkable passage as dictated by the SPIRIT of prophecy, who "in many portions, and in many modes,† spoke to the fathers."

After employing the utmost force and beauty of language to stamp importance upon the words which he was about to utter, and to ensure for

* See Note [C] at the end of this Section.

† Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως. Heb. i. 1.

them a never-dying attention; the patriarch protests his confidence that the LIVING God, the eternal, independent, and unchanging One, would be his VINDICATOR from injustice, and his REDEEMER from all his sorrows; and would restore him from the state of death, to a new life of supreme happiness in the favour and enjoyment of God.*

It is not necessary to suppose that Job understood the full import and extent of what he was "moved by the Holy Spirit to speak." The general belief, on the divine testimony, of a future Saviour from sin and its consequent evils, would place him on a level with other saints, in his own and many succeeding ages, who "died in faith, not receiving the promises" in their *clearest* developement, "but SEEING THEM AFAR OFF." Even when those promises had received many accessions of successive revelations, the Jewish prophets did not apprehend the exact design and meaning of their own predictions; for "they inquired and searched diligently—what or what kind of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify." Our inquiry is, therefore, not so much what the patriarch actually understood,† as what the Author of inspiration intended; since it was "not unto themselves, but unto us," that the patriarchs and prophets "ministered those things." "No prophecy of

* See Note [D] at the end of this Section.

† See Note [E] at the end of this Section.

scripture is of self-solution;”* but is made gradually plainer by new communications from the same omniscient source, and by the light of events.

Upon this principle, it is proper for us to compare the language of this passage, with the character and declarations of HIM to whom “all the prophets gave witness.” He, in the fulness of the times, was manifested, as the REDEEMER from Sin and death, the FIRST and the LAST, and the LIVING ONE, the RESURRECTION and the LIFE; who, in the appointed season, “is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see him; whose voice the dead shall hear, and hearing shall live.”†

If, then, the evidence which we can attain in this case, be sufficient to satisfy an impartial judgment, that the passage before us was “given by inspiration of God,” as a prophecy of the second coming of the only Redeemer and Judge of mankind; it is no less evidence in point to our present investigation, on the PERSON of the Great Deliverer, than if it directly regarded his first advent:—and it unequivocally designates Him by the highest titles and attributes, of Deity.

* —ἰδίᾳς ἐπιλύσεως. 2 Pet. i. 20. I cannot but request the reader who is studious of scriptural knowledge, to peruse Bishop Horsley’s Sermons on this text.

† Tit. ii. 14. Rev. i. 17, 18. Joh. v. 25.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. IX.

Note [A] p. 199.

This version has been formed after long and minute attention, and with a solicitous endeavour to exhibit as literal a conformity to the sense of the original, as the terms and the idiom of the English language will permit. Assistance has been gathered from the ancient, and many modern, versions. Verse 25. The manifest emphasis of *וַאֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי* I could not express in any way less objectionable, as conveying not more nor less than the original, than by, *I surely do know.*—*חַי* the *Living One*; the strictest rendering of this word, which is unquestionably used in the appellative form in passages almost innumerable: sometimes applied to creatures, and then usually rendered, *living thing*; but very frequently it is one of the sublime denominations of the Deity, the Fountain of Life; as Job xxvii. 2. Deut. xxxii. 40. Is. xxxvii. 4. xlix. 18. Lxx. ὁ ἀένναος.—*אֲחֵרֶיךָ* the *Last*, clearly a noun, as in Is. xlv. 6. xlviii. 12. where it is a part of the exalted style of Deity. There is difficulty in the phrase *קוּם עָלַי*. According to the common use of the Hebrew language, it denotes *to rise up against* any one, in defence or resistance; as Deut. xix. 11. Ps. iii. 2. Am. vii. 9. This would give, —“shall arise against the dust,” *i. e.* to confute my frail and dying calumniators; or, to counteract the disorganizing and ruinous effects of mortality.—But the idioms of the book of Job, on account of its very re-

mote antiquity, cannot be justly interpreted by the state of the language many ages afterwards. This would be to explain Homer by the style of Herodian. I conjecture that this sense of the expression is of lower origin, though used in the Pentateuch; for we find the same idea in the book of Job expressed by the Hithpabel form with the prefix ל; ch. xx. 27. and without ל xxvii. 7. but never by the form in question. עפר *dust, scattered earth*, always in this book, when it occurs in the figurative sense, denotes either *the grave*, or *the decomposed elements of the body*. There appears, therefore, most evidence for attributing to the clause this meaning;—" *he shall arise in triumph over the ruins of mortality.*" The Targum and the ancient versions, obscure as they are upon most part of the passage, are more perspicuous here, and they agree to this effect. Verse 26. By a most happy and next to demonstrable emendation, reading נקם וזאת, Mr. Good has restored this hitherto inextricable clause. Verse 27. Referring, with Kennicott, Scott, and Hales, ואל not a stranger, to the OBJECT, affords a noble and consistent meaning; but the common apposition with Job himself scarcely yields any sense at all. Line 11. I separate this clause from the rest, regarding it as a noble and exulting peroration, finely concluding this grand passage. This idea is at least countenanced by the Lxx. and Vulg. The *reins* are metaphorically used, in the Hebrew idiom, to denote *reflection*, Ps. xvi. 7. lxxiii. 21. Prov. xxiii. 16. "As the *Heart* is figuratively used to signify the temper and disposition; so the *Reins*, to signify the close thought and reflection of the mind." *Taylor's Heb. Conc.* The very learned Schultens understands by the phrase, *a most ardent desire, consuming, as it were, the reins*: "Renes mei consumuntur in sinu meo, atque flagrantissimis desideriis ejus apparitionem accelerari opto." *Alb. Schultensii Nova Vers. et Comm. Libr. Jobi*; vol. i. p. 497. This construction is also approved by the younger Rosenmüller, *Schol. in V. T.* vol. v. part ii. p. 471.

Note [B] p. 202.

"Verse 25.—Christians in general, from the earliest times, maintain that Job [in this verse] declares his faith in a happy resurrection at the last day; and this, I have no doubt, is the right construction: but others think that he only hoped for a

temporal deliverance. Dr. Kennicott thinks that he did not refer to either, but only to God's appearing in favour of his innocence before his death; which he actually did: but of this Job could not have had any reasonable expectation, and much of his language is inconsistent with it. His wishing so often for death, as the end of all his troubles, shews that *he had no expectation of any temporal deliverance.*" Dr. PRIESTLEY'S *Notes on Scripture*, vol. ii. p. 160.

Evidence is largely adduced to shew that the patriarch's hope was fixed on deliverance and happiness in a future state, and Bishop Warburton's assertions to the contrary are confuted, in *Peters's Critical Dissertation on the Book of Job*; part II. § ii. and iii. "And, indeed, were this the fixed belief of Job, as the author [of the *Divine Legation*] supposes, that God would at length vouchsafe him a *temporal* deliverance, his tragical complaints must needs appear ridiculous, his frequent wishing for death would be utterly unaccountable, and his patience so very little that posterity could never have regarded him as a pattern and example of it. No; his only hope was that his innocence would be cleared in the day of judgment; but it was a most affecting concern and grief to him, that it could not be cleared before; that, after a life led in the practice of the most eminent and conspicuous virtues, he must nevertheless suffer in the opinions of his nearest friends, and have his fame (the dearest thing in the world to a good man, next to his integrity) transmitted with a blemish to posterity, never to be wiped off till the day of judgment." *Peters*, p. 180.

"Quæ viri sancti verba, qui non de aliâ post mortem vitâ, sed de reddendâ hujus vitæ felicitate, explicant, totum impediunt quæstionis filum; in cujus jam summâ, si eos audias, Jobus sibi contradicit, palinodiam canens, quâ unâ auditâ omnes conticescere disputationes potuissent."—"Those who explain these words, not of a future life, but of the restoration of prosperity in the present, mistake completely the state of the controversy between Job and his friends; in the very crisis of which, according to them, he contradicts himself, and makes such a recantation as was sufficient to finish the whole dispute." *J. D. Michaelis Epimctron in Lowthii Præl.* xxxii. Oxon. 1763, p. 211.

Note [C] p. 203.

See *Peters' Critical Dissertation*: and *Mr. Good's Introductory Dissertation*, on the *Scene, Scope, Language, Author, and Object* of the Book of Job, prefixed to his *Version and Notes*. The verity of the history, the patriarchal antiquity of the poem, and its high rank in the series of the divine dispensations, are, in my opinion, established with much sobriety of criticism, and with solidity and copiousness of proof. In collecting, from critical examination and analysis, the "chief doctrines of the patriarchal religion," Mr. G. states these two particulars.—
 "VII. A day of future resurrection, judgment, and retribution, to all mankind. Ch. xiv. 13—15. xix. 25—29. xxi. 30. xxxi. 14.
 VIII. The propitiation of the Creator, in the case of human transgressions, by sacrifices (ch. i. 5. xlii. 8.) and the mediation and intercession of a righteous Person. Ch. xlii. 8, 9."

Dr. Hales (*Anal. of Chronol.* vol. ii. b. i. p. 58.) has a communication from Dr. Brinkley, the Dublin Professor of Astronomy; taking *Chimah* for the leading vernal constellation, and *Chesil* for the autumnal (ch. xxxviii. 31); and calculating their places by the ratio of the precession of the equinoxes: hence bringing out the age of Job to be 689 years before the Exodus under Moses. Unknown till afterwards to either of the learned writers, M. Ducoutant had published at Paris in 1765, the very same argument, with result *differing only in being 42 years less*. If *Chimah* and *Chesil* be rightly determined to the signs Taurus and Scorpio (which the reasons adduced render, at least, in a very high degree probable), the argument is a demonstration.

"This Book of Job is one of the oldest and most extraordinary productions that are now extant.—Whoever was the author of it, it is probably the oldest artificial composition of much extent that has come down to us, or of which we have any account." *Dr. Priestley's Notes on Scripture*; ii. 137.

Stæudlin, a modern German critic, who plainly disbelieves any inspiration of the Old Testament, takes a middle course. "Conceiving," he says, "that I have discovered in this book phrases, sentiments, and pictures of manners, which belong to a later age, and that its composition is more elaborate and ex-

quisite than the generality of the other Hebrew books, I can hardly deem it so ancient as many scholars of the present day suppose: but, since it exhibits other *indubitable marks* of a venerable antiquity, I am led to suppose that it was composed by some Hebrew author of a lower age, perhaps Solomon himself, out of certain very ancient remains of poetry, history, and philosophy, to which that author had added some things of his own, and had thrown the whole into its present poetical form and arrangement."—*Theol. Moralis Ebræorum ante Christum Hist.* Gotting. 1794.

Note [D] p. 204.

The elder Schultens (whom Michaelis pronounces to have been "the greatest master of oriental learning in his age"), after minutely examining a vast number of interpretations, thus proceeds: "But now, in my turn, I profess my decided opinion, that if these expressions are not an empty and unmeaning pomp of words, they clearly mark the Glorious Day of the Resurrection. Turn whithersoever we may, it is impossible, by fair criticism, to escape the conclusion that *the Redeemer, the Living One, the Last standing over the dust*, refers to the public vindication of Job's innocence; who, though expecting to go down into the dust of death under the reproach of being a guilty person, yet, supported by an upright conscience, declares that a crown of righteousness is laid up for him, which he is fully assured, and desires his assurance to be known to posterity, will be publicly conferred upon him by the righteous Judge of the world, and Redeemer of mankind. This is the point to which the sublime and striking introduction tends, whether (according to my opinion) the image be that of a sepulchral stone, or refer to any other kind of durable monument. With this view, it cannot be well denied that, under the appellation of *Redeemer* and *Living Redeemer*, the Messiah is to be understood. That *Acharon* (the Last) carries the application which the Jews understand, when they call the Messiah *Goel Acharon* (the Last Redeemer) and Moses *Goel Rishon* (the first Redeemer) is uncertain, and is not probable, as such an application of terms could not have been known at that time; but this passage might have afforded occasion for the use of the title." *Schultens in Job. v. i.* 489.

Note [E] p. 204.

Yet we should beware of violating rational probability, by attributing *too little* religious knowledge to the early subjects of revelation. "As to the degree of light and knowledge," Bishop Sherlock observes, "contained in this passage, and which seems disproportionate to the age of Job, there is this to be said: There might possibly be, among the few faithful in the world, a traditionary exposition of the promises of God, grounded upon more express revelations, made either before, or soon after, the flood, than have come down to our times; or, as Job was tried in a very extraordinary manner, he might have as extraordinary a degree of light to support and maintain him in the conflict. There is nothing, in either of these suppositions, but what is conformable to the methods of divine Providence; nothing that intrenches upon our blessed Lord's office who was appointed to 'bring life and immortality to light through the gospel.' It is by Christ, and by him alone, that we have God's covenant of immortality conveyed to us; but yet the ancient prophets had a sight of the blessing at a distance, as is evident from many of their predictions." *Dissert. ii. annexed to the Use and Intent of Prophecy*. The whole disquisition (p. 225—246) on this passage of Job is eminently deserving of attention.

SECT. X.

MESSIAH, SON OF GOD.

 Psalm ii.

1. Why rage the nations?
And the peoples contrive vanity?
The kings of the land have set up themselves,
And the princes are firmly fixed together,
5. Against JEHOVAH, and against his MESSIAH.
“ Let us burst their bands,
“ And cast from us their cords.”
Sitting in the heavens he will laugh,
The Lord will hold them in derision.
10. Then he will rebuke them in his wrath;
And, in his burning anger, he will alarm them.

But I have anointed my King,
Upon Zion, the mountain of my sanctuary.

I will declare the decree:

15. Jehovah hath said to me,
“ My Son art thou;
“ I this day have begotten thee.
“ Ask from me, and I will give the nations, thine inheritance;
“ And thy possession, the uttermost bounds of the earth.
20. “ Thou shalt break them with an iron sceptre:
“ As the vessels of a potter thou shalt dash them.”

Now, therefore, ye kings, have understanding:
Be corrected, ye judges of the earth.

Serve Jehovah with reverence,
 25. And rejoice with trembling.
 Do homage to the Son, lest he be angry,
 And ye perish on the road,
 When his wrath is even for a moment kindled !
 Blessed are all who trust in HIM !**

Apostolic authority permits us not to hesitate in regarding this Psalm as a prophecy of the Messiah's opposed, but invincible, empire.† This is made the subject of a scenic representation, maintained with exquisite energy and beauty. The views which it gives of the Messiah are, that he should be, in a peculiar sense, the Son of God ; that he should be entitled to the homage of the world ; that, pursuant to the appointment of the Almighty Father, he should support his own throne by the righteous exercise of authority and power ; and that the only way of safety and happiness would lie in submission to him and confidence in him.‡

* L. 3. ארץ often denotes *the land of Judea*, and this sense is assigned to it in this place by N. T. authority : Acts iv. 27. L. 10. *rebuke*, the sense suggested by the *Pihel* form, which expresses *strength and efficiency* added to the action of the verb. L. 28. מעט in reference to *time*, as Ps. xxxvii. 10.

† The Chaldee Targum refers this Psalm to the Messiah. So do the Bereshith Rabba, the book Jalkuth, and others of the Talmudical writings. "Our masters have expounded [this Psalm] of the King Messiah : but, according to the letter, and for furnishing answer to the Minim [heretics, *i. e.* the Christians], it is better to interpret it of David himself." *Sol. Jarchi, ap Pocock, in Porta Mosis, Not. p. 307. Venem. in Psalm, tom i. p. 49.* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

‡ See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

The expression, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," is adduced by the apostle as having some reference to the *resurrection* of Christ.* But as, in the Hebrew idiom, the simple form of a verb is sometimes used to express the *declaring, proclaiming, or foretelling* the action of the verb,† it is allowable so to understand the expression here, if we have other evidence that such an acceptation is requisite. Now Christ is undoubtedly designated as the Son of God, previously to his resurrection and on grounds independent of it: and it is plainly asserted that he was "*declared* to be the Son of God, with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead."‡ So that it is sufficiently manifest that this application of the clause under consideration expresses, not the effecting, but the annunciation of the Messiah's sonship. In another part of this work, the inquiry will be instituted into the true meaning of the term, *Son of God*.

The last clause of the Psalm merits particular attention, as demanding that TRUST and CONFIDENCE in the Messiah, which other parts of scripture direct to be reposed only in the everlasting God.§

* Acts xiii. 33.

† E. g. Lev. xiii. 3, 8, 13, 17. Jer. i. 10. Is. vi. 10.

‡ Rom. i. 4. § Jer. xvii. 5. Ps. xl. 4. Mic. vii. 5—7.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. X

Note [A] p. 213.

“ Of thee, Messiah, it is said, *Kiss the Son; thou art my Son.* And he is the Prince of Israel, the Lord of the lower world, the Lord of the ministering angels, the Son of the Most High, and the Indwelling of grace.” *Zohar*, apud *Kuinæ* in *Libros N. T. Histor.* vol. iii. p. 84. Lips. 1817.

Note [B] p. 213.

“ It is obvious at first view, that the high titles and honours ascribed in this Psalm, to the extraordinary person who is the chief subject of it, far transcend any thing that is ascribed in scripture to any mere creature : but if the Psalm be inquired into more narrowly, and compared with parallel prophecies ; if it be duly considered, that not only is the extraordinary person here spoken of called *the Son of God*, but that title is so ascribed to him as to imply, that it belongs to him in a manner that is absolutely singular, and peculiar to himself, seeing he is said to be begotten of God, v. 7, and is called, by way of eminence, *the Son*, v. 12 ; that the danger of provoking him to anger is spoken of in so very different a manner from what the scripture uses in speaking of the anger of any mere creature ‘ Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little : ’ that when the kings and

judges of the earth are commanded to serve God with fear, they are at the same time commanded to kiss the Son, which in those times and places was frequently an expression of adoration; and particularly, that whereas other scriptures contain awful and just threatenings against those who trust in any mere man, the Psalmist expressly calls them blessed who trust in the Son here spoken of; all these things taken complexly, and compared with the above-cited prophecies, make up a character of divinity: as, on the other hand, when it is said, that God would set this his Son as his King on his holy hill of Zion, v. 6; these, and various other expressions in this Psalm, contain characters of the subordination which was proved to be appropriated to that divine Person who was to be incarnate." *Maclaurin's Essay on the Prophecies relating to the Messiah*, p. 50.

SECT. XI.

SON OF MAN ; LORD OF ALL THINGS.

Psalm viii. 5—7.

1. What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
Even the [noblest] son of man, that thou visitest him?
Thou hast reduced him, for a little, below the angels;
But with glory and honour thou hast crowned him.
5. Thou hast made him lord over the works of thy hands;
Thou hast put all beneath his feet.*

By many interpreters this whole Psalm is considered as a direct prophecy, descriptive of the humiliation and dominion of the Messiah; and they have supported their opinion with no contemptible reasons.† Not, however, being fully convinced of this, and wishing always to incline

* L. 1 and 2. Our language has no single terms to mark the distinction so beautifully expressed by *אנוש frail, miserable, man, βροτός, and אדם man at his best state, ανθρωπος*. I have endeavoured to approach the idea by the insertion of an epithet.—
L. 3. *אלהים* though almost constantly the usual name of Deity, must be allowed, on the authority of the Targum, all the Anc. Vers. and the N. T. to signify here creatures superior to the human race, called in scripture *sons of God, spirits, and angels or messengers*.

† See J. H. Michaelis in loc.

to the side of caution, I do not adduce it under this view. As cited in the Epistle to the Hebrews,* it appears to me to convey this sentiment; that the honours here declared to have been conferred upon the human race by the Creator, had never, either generally or in a single instance, been actually verified, till the man Christ Jesus was exalted “above all principality and authority, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;” and hath had “all things put under his feet.”†

Thus considered, this text is a testimony to the real and proper humanity of the Messiah.

* Heb. ii. 6—10.

† Eph. i. 21, 22.

SECT. XII.

THE HOLY ONE OF GOD.

Psalm xvi. 8—11.

1. I have set Jehovah before me continually ;
Since [He is] at my right hand, I shall not be moved.
Therefore my heart rejoiceth, and my glory exulteth ;
Even my flesh shall repose in confidence :
5. For thou wilt not leave my life in the grave ;
Thou wilt not give thy Holy One to see corruption.
Thou wilt make me to know the path of life,
Fulness of joys in thy presence, •
Delights at thy right hand for ever.*

FROM this prophetic description we deduce the proper humanity of the Messiah, his perfect holiness and acceptableness to God, his death, and his speedy resurrection to ineffable glory and joys.* It was the testimony of truth, and not to be the less regarded because extorted from an unwilling and impure witness, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God."†

Psalm xxii. is certainly a prophetic composition, pathetically describing in several minute particu-

* See Notes [A] and [B] at the end of this Section.

† Mark i. 24.

lars the sufferings of the Messiah, and his subsequent triumphs.* But as the passages would scarcely admit of being detached, and as we should draw no inference from them which would be controverted, it does not seem necessary to insert them. The biblical student will find in Kennicott some valuable emendations.

For the same reason, we pass over other Psalms, and parts of Psalms; which, though containing indubitable and important prophecies, do not present any additional matter on the subject of our present inquiry.

* See Note [C] at the end of this Section.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. X.

Note [A] p. 219.

As a specimen of the manner in which some of the German scripture critics take upon them to treat the interpretations which Christ and his apostles delivered, of Old Testament prophecies, I extract the following passage from *Psalmus XVI. Varietate Lectionis et Perpetuâ Adnotatione illustratus, à G. A. Ruperti*; published in 1794 as a Specimen of an intended Commentary on the whole book of Psalms. It is, indeed, a painful specimen of arrogance and impiety: but it may serve as a monition of the caution, and the rigorous investigation, with which we should read the voluminous and often *ostentatious* publications of this school.

“ Many commentators incline to the opinion that, in this poem, the Messiah is speaking; first, under the calamities which overwhelmed him declaring his confidence in the divine goodness; then (v. 4. 5.) professing his priestly office; and finally expressing his assurance that God would raise him from the dead, and preserve his body from corruption. An interpretation which is not only utterly repugnant to the genius and construction of the poetic diction of the Hebrews, but does not even correspond with the notion of the Messiah which the Jews have always formed: for their conception of their Messiah was that he would be a most mighty hero, king, and conqueror;

but not a priest, or a man conflicting with adverse fortune and numerous distresses. But only let this Psalm be read by any one whose mind is imbued, not with preconceived opinions, but with a just taste in Hebrew poetry; and who is not acquainted with what the New Testament teaches, and ancient and modern interpreters have advanced; and *I would lay any wager* that he would hardly find a single expression that would strongly induce him, still less oblige him, to think once of the Messiah: while many particulars occur (as I shall shew on v. 1, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11.) which cannot be referred to Christ without quite torturing their meaning. It can scarcely be told to what wretched shifts those interpreters are put who have got the notion of the Messiah fixed in their minds.—But probably nobody would have fallen into this system of interpretation, if two apostles, Peter and Paul (Acts ii. 25—31; xxviii. 35, &c.), had not applied the words of this Psalm to Christ. But *how insufficient that is to overturn my opinion*, on the sense of the Psalm, *I need not now spend words in proving*. The necessity of that is superseded by the late learned disquisitions of Eckermann, Eichhorn, Paulus, Behn, and others, on such citations in the New Testament.”

In opposition to all this flippant dogmatism we maintain:

1. That the Blessed JESUS and his apostles, taught and constantly guided by the Spirit of truth, were infinitely better judges of the meaning of Old Testament passages, than these persons who so unblushingly vaunt their own interpretative faculty.

2, That, if the apostles believed that any passages contained a reference and conveyed a sentiment, which they did not contain or convey, they were *ignorant* of what they *professed to know*, they were not “adequate (ἱκανοί) ministers of the “New Covenant,” and their whole testimony to the Christian doctrine is rendered *uncertain*.

3. That if, as Eckermann and others (see *Rosenmüller in Psalm. ii. Argum.*) maintain, the apostles used a *wise policy* in convincing and instructing the Jews by the adducing of testimonies and arguments which they knew to signify no such thing as they attributed to them;—they were “*false witnesses* in the name of God.”

4. That, as Christ and his apostles frequently rested their claims upon the single point of the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, yea of the identical passages by them assumed to be prophecies, but which these wise men of our times have discovered not to be so;—they have *failed in that on which they staked their cause*, and the gospel is proved to be a “cunningly devised fable.”

5. But, that the *fair, impartial, and grammatical* construction of the passages in question, is really such as cannot apply to any other than the Messiah. Not that we suppose those passages to have been otherwise than imperfectly understood, at the time of their promulgation; for that would contradict a principal characteristic in the plan of prophecy; but that enough of their meaning was from the first apparent, to convince the men of those times that their proper application was hidden in the darkness of futurity.

These remarks, once for all, will serve as reasons for not noticing, in every instance, the cavils of these infidels or semi-infidels. The positive evidence of our interpretations is submitted to the reader; and let it speak for itself.

Note [B] p. 219.

I shall need no apology for inserting Dr. Kennicott's annotation, and his version of the whole Psalm. The remarkable difference from other versions in v. 2 and 3, arise from reading *אמרוי*, that is only adding *י*, by the authority of a great number of MSS. and all the Anc. Vers.—and from transposing *כל* and *כל*, which has some MS. authority, and in v. 2. that of the Syr. Vers. but not, I apprehend, amounting to sufficient support to warrant the alteration; besides that there appears no adequate grounds for his rendering *קדושים* and *אמרוי* by *divinities* and *heroes* in the idolatrous sense.

“Ps. xvi. An hymn prophetically descriptive of the Messiah; as expressing his abhorrence of the general idolatry of mankind, and his own zeal for the honour of Jehovah: with the full assurance of his being raised from the dead, before *his body should be corrupted* in the grave. That David did not here speak of *himself*, but of the Messiah, and of him only—is asserted by S.

Peter and S. Paul: see Acts ii. 25—32; with xiii. 35—37. And if this Psalm speaks, in a literal sense, concerning *an actual and speedy resurrection*; by that same literal sense, *David himself* is necessarily excluded.

- “ 1. Preserve me, O God; for I have trusted in thee:
 “ 2. I have said unto Jehovah, ‘Thou art my Lord;
 ‘ my goodness is not without thee.’
 “ 3. As for the divinities, which are upon the earth;
 “ these, and the heroes, my delight is not in them.
 “ 4. Their idols are multiplied, after them do men run:
 “ but I will not offer their drink-offerings of blood;
 “ nor will I take even their names upon my lips.
 “ 5. Jehovah! thou hast appointed my portion, and my cup;
 “ thou hast maintained for me my lot.
 “ 6. The lines are fallen to me very pleasantly;
 “ yea, mine inheritance is to me delightful.
 “ 7. I will bless Jehovah, who hath given me counsel;
 “ and by nights mine own thoughts instruct me.
 “ 8. I have set Jehovah before me continually;
 “ for He is on my right hand, I shall not be moved.
 “ 9. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth;
 “ my flesh also shall rest in hope.
 “ 10. For thou wilt not abandon my life to the grave;
 “ thou wilt not give Thy Holy One to see corruption.
 “ 11. Thou shalt make me know the path of life;
 “ thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance:
 “ at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.”

Kennicott's Posthum. Rem. p. 177.

Note [C] p. 220.

“Ps. xxii. Part the first prophetically sets forth the Messiah, as in a state of violent suffering; and the beginning was expressly spoken by Jesus, upon the cross: Matt. 27, 46. The insults of the Jews, on that occasion, here predicted in verses 7 and 8, are recorded by the same Evangelist; 27, 43. The crucifixion itself is foretold, in the words ‘they pierce my hands and my feet:’ ver. 16. And the circumstances of ‘his garments

parted' (i. e. divided in pieces among the soldiers) and 'lots being cast for his vesture,' which was not divided—are recorded in Matt. xxvii. 35. and John xix. 23, 24. Note also, that these extraordinary particulars, thus predicted of the Messiah, and fulfilled in Jesus, and thus proving Jesus to be the Messiah, do not admit any just application to David; nor derive the least countenance, as to him, from the very long history given of him in the Old Testament. It is equally impossible to apply properly to David the second part of this hymn; which expresses the triumph of the Messiah, after his resurrection, and the progress of Christianity through the world.—*Kennicott's Posthumous Remarks*, p. 182.

SECT. XIII.

MESSENGER OF DIVINE BENEVOLENCE.

Psalm xl. 6—10.

1. Sacrifice and offering thou hast no delight in :
Then a body thou hast prepared for me.
Burnt-offering and sin-offering thou desirest not :
Then I said, Behold, I come !
5. In the roll of the book it is written concerning me.
To execute thy pleasure, O God, I do delight ;
Yea, thy law is within my inmost affections.
I have proclaimed righteousness in the great congregation.
Behold, my lips I will not restrain ;
10. O Jehovah, thou knowest.
Thy righteousness I have not concealed within my heart :
Thy faithfulness and thy salvation I have spoken :
I have not hid thy mercy and thy truth from the great
congregation.*

MANY interesting truths present themselves, on the attentive reading of this passage ; but to point out which, is not a part of our present duty. I envy not the intellect or the modesty of those who can say before the world, that they regard this Psalm as a description of the character and resolutions of Jeremiah !—I must despair of ever acquiring

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

consistent knowledge, or satisfaction on any subject of rational inquiry; I must give up the first principles of evidence as to prophecy and inspiration, and, renouncing all sober rules of interpretation, commit myself to the extravagance of fancy and arbitrary dictates;—if THIS be not a clear and characteristic description of the Messiah.

That glorious Person is represented as, in a state of pre-existence to his appearance among mortals, contemplating with supreme joy the designs of divine benevolence, glowing with holy ardour to bear his part in the gracious plan, and ready to assume that human form which, in the appointed time, would be prepared and adapted for this all-important design. His own declaration is in exact coincidence with this prophetic description: “I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.”

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

SECT. XIII.

 Note [A] p. 226.

Dr. Kennicott rendered a valuable service to scripture criticism, in shewing that this Psalm ends with v. 11. of the Hebrew, or v. 10. of the English numeration; and that the remaining verses, beginning, "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies,"—are a totally distinct Psalm, and a complete copy of that which in a decapitated state is placed as Ps. lxx. So Ps. xiv. and liii. are different editions of the same; and Ps. cviii. is made up by joining two portions from the lvii. and the lx. These undeniable instances shew that the very ancient Jewish collectors and editors of this book of divine hymns, were either careless or injudicious.

L. 2. We are here compelled to encounter the long-agitated problem, to decide between, or to reconcile, the present Hebrew text, and that of the Lxx. and the New Testament in Heb. x. 5. The former has literally, "Ears thou hast prepared for me; or (by very allowably taking the prefix and substantive pronoun לִי as a possessive in apposition with אָזְנוֹיִךְ, and by admitting a secondary and not perfectly established acceptation of כָּרַח) "Mine ears hast thou opened." The latter read, "A body hast thou prepared for me." On this difficulty the following observations are submitted.

(1.) Any reference to the supposed Syrochaldaic original of

the Ep. to the Hebrews, and conjecture that the Greek translator might quit his original for the sake of following the Lxx. version, is nugatory : for, in v. 10. the writer reasons upon the reading, “ a body.” In cases where a particular word or clause is not the point under attention, but is only a continuous part of the structure of a sentence cited in the N. T. out of the Old, it may perhaps be admitted that a N. T. writer would quote according to the Lxx. though that version contained, in such instance, an *immaterial* inaccuracy ; but this solution can have no place here.

(2.) Between the two suppositions,—that the writer of the Epistle has quoted scripture erroneously, and upon the very error has founded doctrinal positions;—and that, at a period subsequent to the making of the Greek translation of the Lxx. and even the writing of the N. T. some Jewish transcriber, whether by mistake or from design to injure the Christian cause, committed an error in three letters whose shapes are not very dissimilar;—between these two suppositions, no man can hesitate, who believes in the divine inspiration, or even in the common integrity and knowledge of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

(3.) The difference between the two readings, when represented to the eye, is so slight that a careless or hasty copyist might easily mistake the one for the other.

Ears,	אָנִים
Then a body,	אָן גוֹרָה
or,	אָן גוֹרִיחַ

(4.) The verb כָּרַח properly signifies *to prepare, to obtain* ; and is applied to different modes of acquiring an object ; as the obtaining by purchase, and then it is rendered, *to buy* (Deut. ii. 6.), or the obtaining by manual labour, in which sense it is applied to the making of a pit, a cavern, or a grave ; and, in these connections, translators have commonly rendered it, *to dig*. But it may be justly questioned whether *digging* can be regarded as the meaning of the word *in itself*.—It is applied in the same manner to the *preparing of a feast* (2 Kings vi. 23.), but no philologist has affirmed that it signifies *to cook* ; yet this would be equally true as that, in other connections, it signifies *to dig*.—

In the passages where the law is given of indenting to servitude for life by the ceremony of boring the ear, this word is *never used*. See Ex. xxi. 6. Deut. xv. 17.

(5.) The remains of the Old Italic Version, made in the first or second century, and the Æthiopic, made certainly at a very early period (see *Walton's Prolegomena*), having been both from the Lxx. confirm the genuineness of its present reading. The Syriac Version of the O. T. was made from the Hebrew, and is of very high antiquity, probably of the apostolic age or earlier. As it stands in le Jay's and Walton's Polyglotts, it agrees with the common Hebrew: but a MS. of this Vers. in the Royal Library at Paris, and another at Milan, both of great antiquity, have the reading, "a body." One, in the Bodleian, unites both readings; as does the Arabic in Walton's Polyglott. See *Kennic. Diss. Gen.* § 18, 77, 88. *Pierce on Heb. x. 5.* *Hallet's Notes on SS.* vol. ii. p. 1.

From the united force of these considerations, my mind is satisfied that the TRUE and ORIGINAL reading of the passage is that of the Septuagint and the New Testament, "a body thou hast prepared for me."

It is fair, however, to observe that some distinguished scholars and divines, among whom are Nicolas Fuller, James Alting, Dr. John Owen, Frischmuth, and the two Rosenmüllers, have maintained that the present Hebrew reading is genuine, and that the other is an interpretation or paraphrase upon it. The note of the elder Rosenmüller will explain the hypothesis. "The translator of the Lxx. Vers. understood כָּרַח in the sense of *preparing*, as in Deut. ii. 6. 2 Kings vi. 23. Hos. iii. 2. and אָזְנוֹי *ears*, he supposed to be put by *synecdoche* for the whole body. It is of no importance to offer any other conjectures about the cause of this reading in the Greek Vers. The words of the Hebrew text come to the same sense: for *mine ears thou hast bored or opened*, is the same as, *thou hast rendered me obedient to thee*. So, in Is. i. 5, 'The Lord hath opened mine ear.' In the like sense is used גִּלַּח to *uncover the ear*, i. e. to *communicate information*, as 1 Sam. xx. 2. God is said to *open the ear*, when he causes men first to give attention to his admonitions and commands, and then to comply with them. The expression, 'a body hast thou prepared me,' is to be understood

of the preparation of a body, and its being offered as a sacrifice. The sense is; Thou hast created for me a body, to be employed in obediently fulfilling thy will, and yielding it to death. The scope of the apostle is; Since the sacrifices commanded by the law of Moses could not take away sin, Christ condescended to offer himself, and by this sacrifice to atone for our guilt, and give peace to our consciences."—*Schol. in Heb. x. 5*

SECT. XIV.

GOD, TRIUMPHING AND REIGNING FOR EVER.

 Psalm xlv. 2—8.

1. Beauteous art thou, above the sons of men !
 Loveliness is diffused upon thy lips :
 Therefore God blesseth thee for ever.
 Gird thy sword upon thy thigh,
5. Mighty in thy glory, and thy majesty !
 And in thy majesty proceed,
 Be borne forwards, on the word of truth and the meekness
 of righteousness ;
 And thy right hand shall shew from thee awful things.
 Thine arrows are sharpened : the peoples are beneath thee :
10. They shall faint in heart who are the enemies of the King.
 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever !
 A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness ;
 Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of
 joy above thy companions.*

THE Chaldee paraphrase is a sufficient proof that the ancient Jews, even under the ignorance and enmity which distinguished them in the early ages of Christianity, considered this splendid ode as an address to the Messiah : and no Christian, none at least who admits the divine authority of

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

the Epistle to the Hebrews, can doubt of the validity of such application.* But the editors of the *Improved Version* have given this translation of the citation in the Epistle: "But to the Son [he saith,] God is thy throne for ever and ever:"—and the author of the *Calm Inquiry* does not scruple to affirm: "it is well known that the words of the original will equally well bear to be translated, 'God is thy throne;' that is, the support of thy throne."† On this we remark:

1. It is not quite consistent with fairness in argument, for the learned writer roundly to assert as *well known*, what he could not but know to be extremely disputable, and to have been, in fact, generally objected to.‡

2. Because, in the passages mentioned by Mr. LINDSEY, the Most High promised that He will establish, or build up, a throne for ever, it by no means follows that the expression, "God is thy throne," is analogous or proper. The use of a metaphor so harsh, and apparently repugnant to

* Some, indeed, both in ancient and modern times, have doubted the canonical authority of this Epistle. But Dr. John Owen, in his *Preliminary Exercitations to his Exposition*, Mr. Peirce in the *Introduction to his Paraphrase and Notes*, and Dr. Lardner, in his *Supplement to the Credibility*, appear to me to have very satisfactorily settled this question in the affirmative, and to have advanced arguments which make it amount to a moral certainty that the apostle Paul was the author.

† See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

‡ See Note [C] at the end of this Section.

good taste and to piety, should have been justified by ample proofs of the same or a similar usage. No such proofs are produced. God is often denominated a rock, a tower, a fortress, a shield, a refuge, to his faithful servants: but, in all these and similar metaphors, there is an obvious superiority in strength and dignity preserved to the Divine Being. The reader immediately associates with these expressions the ideas of power and grandeur in a PROTECTING being, and of his pre-eminence above the objects protected. But it is the reverse in the case brought before us. A *throne* derives its dignity from the character and dominion of the sovereign who sits upon it. To call the Eternal Majesty the throne of a creature, seems little suitable to the reverence which is ever to be maintained towards Him, and which is one of the most distinguishing characters of the scripture style: and, in point of taste, the use of such a *catachresis* could never be adopted by any author who had a particle of correct feeling. *

3. This gloss nearly, if not quite, destroys the *antithesis* intended in the Epistle, and brings to nothing the argument conveyed by it. It will be recollected, that the design of the passage is to shew the superiority of the Messiah to all the other servants and messengers of God, that have ever been employed in the scheme of his government and revealed mercy; whether they have been human messengers, or intelligences of a

* See Note [D] at the end of this Section.

superior order. Let us, then, endeavour to represent this reasoning, according to the mind of the gentlemen who propose the new interpretation.

Heb. i. 7, 8. Impr. Vers.

Paraphrase.

Of these messengers [the scripture] saith, "Who maketh the winds his messengers, and flames of lightning his ministers." But to the Son [he saith,] "God is thy throne for ever and ever."—

The inferiority of all other messengers of the divine will is manifest, because God frequently makes the inanimate powers of nature the instruments of accomplishing his various purposes. On the contrary, the superiority of Christ over those messengers appears from this, that his authority and power are maintained and supported by God himself.

I have sincerely endeavoured to represent the spirit of the passage, thus interpreted, in as faithful and advantageous a manner as I could: but I confess myself destitute of penetration enough to discover any coherence between the parts, or any semblance of argument in the conclusion.

It is proper to bring the commonly received interpretation to the same test: and this I shall attempt with the utmost impartiality.

Concerning the angels indeed he saith, "He who maketh his angels winds, and his attendants a flame of fire."* But concerning

With respect to all the other messengers of the divine will to men, even if they be of the highest order of created intelligences, the scripture describes them as being,

* See Note [E] at the end of this Section.

the Son, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever!" in the sight of God, only as the ordinary agents of nature; whose operations and effects are entirely the result of the all-pervading providence and power of the Most High. But, with respect to Christ, the same unerring testimony declares him to be really God, his power universal, and his dominion everlasting.

Whether this interpretation be the true one or not, it seems to have sense and consistency. It answers the conditions of the argument. It preserves the contrast, and brings out the conclusion, in a manner intelligible and striking to any capacity. It shews that the noblest servants of God, human or angelic, are nothing in themselves, and are as absolutely dependant on him as any part of the inanimate universe; while it exhibits the Messiah as the very Being who "sitteth upon the circle of the earth," and, in comparison of whom, "all nations are as nothing, and are counted to him less than nothing and vanity."

4. Mr. B. needs not to be told that the vocative $\omega\theta\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$, is of extremely rare occurrence in the New Testament and the Septuagint; its place being almost uniformly supplied by $\acute{o}\ \theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$, according to idiom of the Attic, the common Greek, and Alexandrian.* Not the shadow of a reason

See Note [F] at the end of this Section.

exists for preferring the construction wished for, on the ground of grammatical propriety.

5. All the Ancient Versions of the original passage in the Psalms, agree in supporting the common construction, so far as their respective idioms permit a positive conclusion. The Chaldee Paraphrase, the Greek of Aquila, and the Arabic of the London Polyglott, are incontrovertible.*

From these considerations, it appears to me perfectly clear, that the only just and fair translation, is that which Jews and Christians, ancient and modern, have almost universally adopted;—
“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever!”

But, if the first post prove untenable, Mr. B. can retreat to another. Archbishop NEWCOME adhering to the common version, “remarks that the same words are addressed to Solomon.” We are, therefore, to understand that all further argument is superfluous. The Calm Inquirer dismisses the cause as determined.

* The Syriac corresponds with the Hebrew; the Vulgate, and (as I suppose from the Latin Version) the Æthiopic, with the Lxx. The Arabic prefixes an interjection of invoking, to the word *God*. The Targum has; “The throne of thy glory, O Jah, standeth for ever and ever!” Aquila (an apostate to Judaism from Christianity, at the beginning of the second century, and a bitter enemy to the Christian cause), translated the Heb. *‘O θρόνος σου, Θεέ, ‘εις αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι.* *Euseb. Dem. Ev. lib. iv. § 15. p. 181. Ed. Col. 1688.*

If it be admitted that in this Psalm there was an original reference to Solomon, it will also be maintained by those who are not disposed to hold the authority of the New Testament in plain contempt, that such a reference could exist in only a low degree, and that it was designedly subordinate to an infinitely more important and glorious application. The Psalm would, therefore, belong to the kind of composition which Bishop Lowth has so admirably illustrated under the name of the *Mystic Allegory* :* a kind in which the descriptions, whether drawn in imagery or in plain words, agree to the proximate object in a very reduced and accommodated sense : but to the remote object, which is always the principal, in a sense the most exalted and perfect. That some of the prophecies of the Old Testament are of this class, those must have a singular faculty of trampling upon evidence, who can deny. Supposing the one in question to be such, it would follow, upon the soundest principles of interpretation, that there is the same difference between the meaning of the epithets when applied to Solomon their immediate, and to the Messiah their ultimate, object, as there is between the office and the dominion of the two.

* *De Sacra Poesi Hebræorum*, Præl. xi. a work which it would be superfluous to praise : but, as many neglect it who ought to profit by it, it may be allowed me to say that, for elegance of style and importance of matter, few books have a higher claim on the attention of young persons of taste, and especially students in divinity.

Hence, in this particular instance, the term *God* would be attached to Solomon in a sense *so far inferior* to that in which it was intended for the Messiah, as the limited and temporary kingdom of the former fell short of the extent and duration destined for the reign of the latter. The one reigned forty years over Judea and its dependencies: the other possesses “dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages shall serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”—Thy throne O God, is for ever and ever!

But the whole hypothesis of any reference to Solomon rests upon questionable grounds. The Targum is very good evidence that no such opinion, nor any tradition leading to it, existed among the ancient Jews. The Rabbinical writers are strangers to it.* Equally so are the Christian fathers; who, though rarely to be deemed models of just and rational interpretation, are entitled to be heard in a question on which it is barely possible that traditional opinions might have reached them. Learned, cautious, and pious commentators since the reformation are by no means unanimous in its favour; and many have advanced

* “This Psalm treats of David, or rather of his Son the Messiah, for that is his name: My servant David shall be a prince in the midst of them.” (Ez. xxxiv. 24.) *Aben Ezra* on Ps. xlv. 2. “These verses speak of the King the Messiah.” *Joseph Ben Mose, ap. Schoetgen. Hor. Hebr. et Talm. t. i. p. 928.*

strong objections against it.* The critics of the modern German school contend that there are marks of internal evidence, conclusively refuting such an opinion.† Bishop Horsley denounces the conjecture in terms of no tame disapprobation, and curiously assigns its origin to Calvin's want of sensibility to the beauties of poetic imagery, and his consequent disqualification for perceiving the propriety and unity of design in so rich and highly wrought compositions.‡ If internal evidence be consulted, there are important circumstances of objection to the notion of a primary reference to Solomon; or of *any other* design than a celebration, in the known imagery of prophecy, of the Divine Messiah, the dignity of his person, the power and grace of his kingly office, and the conversion of nations to the "faith which is in him."§

Having, not carelessly, nor, I trust partially, thus examined the question, my conviction rises at every step, that the address so long discussed, is the language of joyful homage to the Lord the Messiah, from his redeemed church;—language congenial with the reason and the feelings of every holy being "on earth and in heaven:"—
THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOR EVER AND EVER.
"Blessing and honour, and glory and power, be

* See *Poole's Synopsis*, *Cocceius*, *Peirce's* note on Heb. i. 8 and *Venema's Prolegomena*.

† See *Rosenmüller, jun. Arg. in Ps. xlv*.

‡ *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 67.

§ See Note [G] at the end of this Section.

unto HIM that sitteth upon the throne, and unto THE LAMB, for ever and ever!"*

At the same time this magnificent Person, whose benignity, power, and holiness are thus celebrated, is represented as receiving from HIS GOD a special appointment to the office of Messiah; an office whose importance far surpasses that of all other kings and priests and prophets; and an appointment the propriety of which is expressly founded upon his character and qualifications: "THEREFORE, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of joy above thy companions."

* Rev. v. 13.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. XIV.

Note [A] p. 232.

- * L. 1—3. “Thy beauty, O king Messiah, is pre-eminent above the sons of men: the spirit of prophecy is given into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.” Targum. L. 7. על-דבר according to a known idiom, might be rendered, *on the account, concern, business*: but I am induced to prefer the other and strictly literal rendering, because (1.) it appears in more natural accordance with the connection; (2.) the structure of the sentence requires that דבר should have the same apposition to אמת as ענוה has to צדק; (3.) parallel examples occur in Eccl. xii. 10. Esth. ix. 30. (4.) this form is adopted by some of the best modern translations, as those of Pagninus, Calvin, Junius and Tremellius, Diodati, Moller, Venema, Geddes, Cassiodore del Reyna; the Dutch, and the Geneva French. L. 14. משוח *hath anointed thee*. We cannot make sensible, without a periphrasis, the allusion to the name *Messiah*; which is only a participle of the verb here used. The Greek has the advantage of other languages in this: *ἔχρισε*, i. e. *χριστὸν ἔθηκε*. Eusebius, Jerome, and others have thought that אלהים is here in the vocative as in L. 11. thus, “Therefore, O God, thy God hath,” &c. Both the Hebrew and the Greek would fairly bear this construction; but it could not be *proved*, as the other is equally fair, and the Ancient Versions (so far as they apply) are against it.

Note [B] p. 233.

“This is a quotation from Psalm xlv. 6. And it is well known that the words of the original will equally well bear to be translated, ‘God is thy throne;’ that is, the support of thy throne. See Grotius, Clarke, and Peirce in loc. Mr. Lindsey contends that this must be the proper translation, because it is most analogous to the language of Scripture. 2 Sam. vii. 13, 16. 1 Chron. xvii. 12, 14. Psalm lxxxix. 4. Archbishop Newcome translates, ‘Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;’ but he remarks, that in the Psalm the same words are addressed to Solomon.”—*Calm Inq.* p. 230. ‘But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever:’ or, ‘God is thy throne,’ i. e. the supporter of thy throne. Psalm xlv. 6, 7.—*q. d.* The power and authority of former prophets, such as Moses, Elijah, and others, however great and awful for a time, was but transitory and evanescent; but thy kingdom is immoveable, thy dominion is everlasting.”—*Ib.* p. 208.

Note [C] p. 233.

See the London *Critici Sacri*, *Poole's Synopsis*, *Wolfius's Cura Philologica*, and *Venema's Prolegomena*, on the passage.—Le Clerc in his Commentary on this Psalm, written towards the close of his long life, but while his faculties were yet vigorous (“*integris adhuc animi et corporis viribus*,” says his editor), expresses his views in a manner which satisfactorily shews that, in his latter years at least, he did not hold the Socinian hypothesis. “Ver. 7.—Locus ‘de Christo intellectus—ex totâ significationis vocum amplitudine explicari potest. Quamvis מלך־הַמֶּלֶךְ dicantur ab Hebræis iudices et magistratus, qui loco Dei sunt in jure dicendo; sensus quo Messias dicitur Deus planè alius est, cùm sic vocatus sit quia in eo *omnis plenitudo Deitatis habitat*, quod de nullo alio dictum est, neque dicetur.—Ver. 8.—Ratione humanitatis, Deum suum habet, quo sensu—Joh. xx. 17, &c.—Alioqui Deitas quæ in eo *corporaliter habitat*, est ipse Summus Deus, qui Deum non habet, sed deorum est omnium Deus.”—“Ver. 7. In application to Christ, this passage may be understood to the full extent of the meaning of the words.

Though judges and magistrates were called *gods* by the Hebrews, they being vicegerents of God in distributing justice, it is in a totally different sense that the Messiah is called God: for he is so styled, because *in him* dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead, which never was, and never will be, said of any other.—Ver. 8. Jesus Christ, with respect to his humanity, hath his God, as in Joh. xx. 17, &c.—But the Deity which *dwelleth bodily in him*, is the Supreme God himself, who hath no God, but is the God of all gods.” *Clerici V. T.* tom. iii. Amst. 1731.

Note [D] p. 234.

Mr. B. refers to Grotius. But that eminent scholar, much as his predilections might have induced a wish to do so, does not venture to give “God is thy throne,” as the *construction* of the passage. He seems anxiously to avoid any construction, contenting himself with saying, “The *sense* is, God himself is thy perpetual seat.” Long before Grotius, the Jew Saadiah had advanced a similar gloss; saying that there was an ellipsis of יִכִּין, and that the sense is, “God shall establish thy throne.” This violent extravagance was, however, disowned by his own nation. None of them, though from the principles of modern Judaism they might have been strongly disposed to it, have dared to follow him. Enjedin says that the words will *admit* of this explication; “*possunt sic commodè explicari.*” Macey, in his Gr. and Engl. N. T. 1729, and Samuel Crellius, as might be expected, follow Enjedin. But, as one has often occasion to observe, that the writers of this school become bolder as they advance, improving wishes into conjectures and conjectures into certainties, we find a writer in the *Commentaries and Essays* issued from Essex Street in 1783, under the signature of *Eli-pandus*, roundly affirming: “The *juster* construction and translation of it, is not, ‘Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;’ but ‘God is thy throne,’ i. e. the support of it, ‘for ever and ever.’”

Dr. Sam. Clarke, in his *Reply to Nelson*, p. 87, written after his *Scripture Doctrine*, follows the commonly received construction. So does Mr. Peirce in his Paraphrase, but in a note affirming that it is “doubtful,” and perhaps intimating a wish in favour of the other rendering.

Note [E] p. 235.

Some interpreters invert the common order of the subject and predicate in this clause, thus, “ —the winds his messengers, and the flash of fire his servants.” This version would equally support the contrast and the conclusion of the argument. But it appears inadmissible, because (1.) it would not thus be true that this is said “ concerning the angels,” as the Epistle asserts, whether we understand by that term human or superior beings : (2.) the structure of the Hebrew in Ps. civ. 4. most naturally, and of the Greek in the Epistle *necessarily*, requires the common construction. The Chaldee Targum paraphrases the verse ; “ Who maketh his messengers swift as the wind ; his servants mighty as the glittering fire.” All the Ancient Versions decidedly adhere to the same construction.—The Calm Inquirer adopts the interpretation here declined in a Note which certainly does not pay *too much* respect to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. “ Another remarkable instance of *lax interpretation*. The quotation is from Psalm civ. 4, the proper translation of which is, ‘ He maketh the winds his messengers, and the lightnings his ministers.’ It is an assertion in beautiful and poetic language of the sovereign dominion of God over the powers of nature. But this writer *avails himself* of the ambiguity of the language, and accommodates the words to the authority of the prophets.’ ”—P. 207,

Note [F] p. 236.

In the instances almost innumerable of the invocation, *O God*, which occur in the Book of Psalms, I have not been able, after a close examination, to find a single example of Θεε, but all are ὁ Θεός. In the other books of the Lxx. I can find Θεε only in Lev. xvi. 22. and Jud. xvi. 28. In the N. T. only in Matt. xxvii. 46.

Note [G] p. 240.

“ Upon the whole, therefore, it appears, that in the character which the psalmist draws of the king whose marriage is the occasion and the subject of this song, some things are so general,

as in a certain sense to be applicable to any great king, of fable or of history, of ancient or of modern times. And these things are, indeed, applicable to Solomon, because he was a great king, but for no other reason. They are no otherwise applicable to him, than to King Priam or Agamemnon, to King Tarquin or King Herod, to a king of Persia or a king of Egypt, a king of Jewry or a king of England. But those circumstances of the description which are properly characteristic, are evidently appropriate to some particular king,—not common to any and to all. Every one of these circumstances, in the psalmist's description of his king, positively exclude King Solomon; being manifestly contradictory to the history of his reign, inconsistent with the tenor of his private life, and not verified in the fortunes of his family. There are, again, other circumstances, which clearly exclude every *earthly* king,—such as the salutation of the king by the title of God, in a manner in which that title never is applied to any created being; and the promise of the endless perpetuity of his kingdom. At the same time, every particular of the description, interpreted according to the usual and established significance of the figured style of prophecy, is applicable to and expressive of some circumstance in the mystical union betwixt Christ and his church. A greater, therefore, than Solomon is here."—*Horsley's Serm.* vol. i. p. 75.

SECT. XV.

ADORED BY ANGELS.

Ps. xcvi. 7.

“Worship him, all ye angels!”

THAT the Being to whom supreme adoration is here required, is “JEHOVAH the God of the whole earth,” (v. 1, 5.) none can doubt. But it is doubted whether this is the passage cited in Heb. i. 6. as an attribution of homage by angels to Christ. It is of little importance, whether beings of a superior rank be there intended, or those human *messengers* of the divine will, the prophets, mentioned in the first verse of the Epistle.* The Epistle reads differently from both the Hebrew and the Septuagint; not indeed as to the sense, but in the form of expression: “Let all the angels of God worship him.” The *Calm Inquirer*, and the *Annotator on the Improved Version* (if indeed these can be reckoned two persons), following *Whiston*, *Sykes*, and *Samuel Crellius*, affirm that the quotation is from the Septuagint translation of Deut. xxxii. 43.; a passage of very doubtful au-

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

thenticity, not being found in the Hebrew text, nor in any of the other ancient versions. Its absence from the Arabic affords no faint presumption that it was not in the copy of the Septuagint, from which that version was made ; and its variations in the different manuscripts of the Septuagint itself, afford another presumption against its genuineness. All things considered, it appears not improbable, that some revisor or editor of the Greek Pentateuch made the insertion from the Psalm before us,* or, with a mistaken zeal for apostolic accuracy, from the citation in the Epistle.

But the Annotator does not scruple to assure us, that the passage “ is spoken of the Hebrew nation, and *therefore* cannot be understood of religious worship.” † If this writer be willing to abide by the issue of his own logic, we may reply to him, that the words are NOT “ spoken of the Hebrew nation ;” but that the antecedent to the relative is JEHOVAH, and, that, “ *therefore*, they must be understood of religious worship.‡

If the quotation were intended to be from the Psalm, the difference in the words is immaterial to the sense, and is not greater than occurs in some instances of passages from the Old Testament introduced into the New.§

* So Pierce suggests.

† See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

‡ See Note [C] at the end of this Section.

§ See Note [D] at the end of this Section.

The manner in which the citation is adduced seems to be, not at first sight, but on a more intimate inspection, allusive to the scope and purport of the Psalm. “When he introduceth the first-begotten to the world, he saith ——.” Where shall we find any thing corresponding to this? Nothing in the least resembling it is found in the preceding context of the passage in Deuteronomy. But, admitting with the most learned and rational interpreter among the modern Jews,* that the Psalm refers to the Messiah, we find the context in that Psalm such as, in the most sublime manner and with the imagery usually applied to *the same* subject in the prophetic writings, plainly INTRODUCES HIM TO THE WORLD. After a splendid introduction, describing the awful majesty of Him, at whose dominion the world is called upon to rejoice, the prophet declares, that “the heavens” (the most exalted instruments employed in promulgating the divine will) announce, and all the nations of the world receive “his righteousness and glory;” the very terms by which the prophets often describe the doctrine and reign of the Messiah :† he predicts the abolition of idolatry and the punishments of those who shall obstinately adhere to it : *he calls on the angels to do their homage* to this Illustrious Sovereign : and then represents the exultation of the true church of God among the Jews, on account of the extension of

* David Kimchi. He says that the Psalms xciii. to ci. contain the mystery of the Messiah. *Rosenm. sen.* in Heb. i. 6.

† Is. xl. 5. li. 4—8. Ps. xcvi. 2, 3.

his holy and gracious empire over the gentiles.— Thus does the Lord God of the holy prophets INTRODUCE THE FIRST-BEGOTTEN TO THE WORLD.

But it is not necessary to insist upon this, satisfactory as I think it must appear to an impartial person. For the bare purpose of our argument, it is not important to which place of scripture the writer of the Epistle had reference. In either case, the pronoun which represents the object to whom adoration is commanded to be paid, has most clearly no other antecedent than “the Lord of the whole earth,”* who “lifteth up his hand to heaven, and saith, I live for ever.”†

* Ps. xcvi. 5

† Deut. xxxii. 40.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. XV.

Note [A] p. 247.

Mr. Belsham (citing, as his supporters, Mr. Wakefield and the Impr. Vers.) asserts, "The connexion requires that the word ἄγγελοι, 'angels,' in this chapter, should be taken in its usual sense of *messengers*, not *angels*." *Calm Inq.* p. 205. The Impr. Vers. accordingly carries on this interpretation down to ch. ii. 4, using the word *messengers*. Then it is compelled suddenly to change to *angels*; v. 5—18, the argument so palpably requiring it. But it becomes an impartial inquirer to consider, whether there be any solid reason to admit such a change of reference in the subject; and whether the sense of ch. i. 7. ii. 2. (compare Gal iii. 19.) do not more probably limit the term throughout to the single acceptation of celestial agents.—Our argument, however, is not affected by this question.

Note [B] p. 248.

Impr. Vers. So also Mr. B. "By a bold prosopopœia, the former prophets and messengers of God are summoned to do homage to Christ, in consequence of his resurrection from the dead, and to acknowledge him as their superior." "The quotation is from Deut. xxxii. 43; LXX. The words are not to be found in the Hebrew. They are applied to the Hebrew nation upon its restoration from a calamitous and desolate state: and

it is with a very great latitude of interpretation, which was indeed common in that age, and in which this writer frequently indulges, that they are made applicable to Christ." *Calm. Inq.* p. 206, 207.

Note [C] p. 248.

This will appear to any who, with common attention, consult the passage. The following close translations will make the matter clear to the unlearned reader. He is desired to read, in his bible, the preceding connection.

Hebrew.	Lxx. Aldine.	Lxx. Vatican.	Lxx. Alexandrine.
	Rejoice, ye heavens with him, and let all the angels of God worship him:	Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him. Rejoice, ye nations, with his people, and let all the sons of God be strong in him: for he avengeth the blood of his sons, and will avenge; and he will recompense vengeance to his enemies, and he will recompense those that hate him: and the Lord will purify the land of his people.	Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the sons of God worship him. Rejoice, ye nations, with his people, and let all the angels of God strengthen them: for he avengeth the blood of his sons, and will avenge; and he will recompense vengeance to his enemies, and he will recompense those that hate: & the Lord will purify the land of his people.
Sing praises, ye nations, his people:			
for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and he will render vengeance to his enemies;			
and he will be propitious to his land, his people.			

Note [D] p. 248.

* Προσκυνήσατε αὐτῷ, πάντες ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ. Worship him, all his angels. Lxx. Προσκυνήσάτωσαν αὐτῷ, πάντες ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ. Let all the angels of God worship him. Heb. i. 6.

SECT. XVI.

THE CREATOR, ETERNAL AND UNCHANGEABLE.

Psalm cii. 25—29.

1. Through all ages are thy years !
Of old thou didst lay the foundation of the earth ;
And the work of thy hands, the heavens are.
They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure :
5. Even the whole of them, like a garment, shall wear away ;
As a covering thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed :
But Thou art HE ; and thy years shall never be finished.
The children of thy servants shall abide,
And their seed shall be established in thy presence.

NONE deny this passage to be a description of the eternity and immutability of God. It is quoted by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in such a manner as at least appears to be a direct and unreserved application to Christ. If, however, this were admitted, and the epistle acknowledged to be of divine authority, the question, whether Christ possesses a nature properly divine, would no longer remain controverted. It is, therefore, asserted, that “ the immutability of God is here declared as a pledge of the immutability of the kingdom of Christ.”* On this we observe :

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

1. This interpretation falls under the objection made to that of Ps. xlv. 6. as not comporting with the design and reason of the argument.

2. The passage being annexed by the simple copulative to the former passage, which is undoubtedly an address to Christ, we are obliged, in fairness of construction, to understand it in the same direction.

3. The orthodox interpretation suits, without any straining or perplexity, the connection and the scope, both of the Psalm and of the citation in the Epistle.

The Psalm was written by some pious and inspired Israelite, probably during the captivity, or under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. The outline of it is, a plaintive description of the depressed and languishing condition of the church of God; and an encouraging contemplation of its revival and extension among the gentiles; then the writer is suddenly checked by the reflection of his own mortality, and the thought that he could not hope to see the happy state of things which the spirit of prophecy enabled him to behold afar off: but to relieve his mind from this distressing feeling, he takes refuge in the unchangeableness of the great Preserver and Deliverer of the church, and the certainty that he would fulfil the promises of his grace to the latest posterity of his faithful people. Is it incredible

or improbable, that, under these descriptions, the mourning but not despairing psalmist looked forwards to the promised Saviour, the Hope of Israel? His knowledge was, of course, obscure; but his faith was not the less certain. Who was destined to restore the desolate church, and to extend its blessings among all nations,—but “Jesus Christ, THE SAME yesterday, to-day, and for ever?”

The manifest design of the part of the Epistle in which the citation occurs, has been before stated: and it is evidently most agreeable to that design, to place in contrast with the dependence, the weakness, the nothingness, of the most exalted creatures, the characters of ETERNITY and IMMUTABLE FAITHFULNESS in the Saviour of men and Lord of angels.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

SECT. XVI.

Note [A] p. 253.

Annot. Impr. Vers. The same interpretation is given by the old Socinians, and has been generally adopted by their followers. The Calm Inquirer's words will serve *instar omnium*. "These words are a quotation from Ps. cii. 25, and are certainly addressed to the eternal God. The writer of this epistle having cited the promise, Ps. xlv. 6. that God would support the throne of the Messiah, in an eloquent apostrophe he addresses the Supreme Being in the language of the Psalmist, acknowledging and adoring that immutability of the divine nature, and of his wise and benevolent purposes, which constitute the surest pledge of the stability of the Messiah's kingdom."—P. 172.

Enjedin prefers another solution. He considers the passage as addressed to Christ, by accommodation, as the Founder and Head, and so in a sense the Creator, of the new world, or gospel dispensation. This was, also, Grotius's notion. We shall, in another place, inquire into the doctrine of scripture on the *new creation*.—To what deplorable distress must Grotius have been reduced when he could bring himself to write:—"this world being created for the sake of the Messiah, I should think that the expression, *thou hast founded*, may signify, *thou hast been the cause of the earth's being founded*; and, *the work of thy hands*, the same as, *made for thy sake*." *Annot. in Heb. i. 10.*

SECT. XVII.

THE LORD; THE IMMORTAL PRIEST AND CONQUEROR.

Psalm cx.

1. Jehovah saith to my Lord [Adon,] Sit thou at my right hand,
Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.
Jehovah out of Zion shall send the sceptre of thy strength :
Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.
5. Thy people [shall present] voluntary offerings, in the day
of thy power, in the beauties of holiness :
From the womb of the morning, thine shall be the dew
of thy youth,
Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest
for ever,
After the constitution of Melchisedek.
The Lord [Adonai] is on thy right hand :
10. He smiteth kings in the day of his wrath ;
He will execute judgment on the nations, filling them
with the bodies of the slain ;
He smiteth the chieftain over a great country :
He will drink of the stream by the path,
And will therefore [triumphantly] lift up his head.*

THE Messiah is here represented as a person distinct from Jehovah, and as receiving from him a dominion the most extensive, a dominion the exercise of which is described in characters which

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

we cannot, without difficulty, conceive as inherent in a merely created and dependent being. He is represented as a Sovereign, no less than a Priest; as receiving the homage of his devoted subjects; and as employing irresistible powers in discomfiting and punishing his persisting opposers.

These descriptions may, indeed, after undergoing considerable reduction, be considered as a symbolical picture of the progress and efficacy of Christian doctrine, *declaring* the favourable regards of the Most High to those who dutifully receive it, and his displeasure upon those who reject and resist it. But it would remain to be considered, whether the abatements and reductions necessary for such a purpose, could be vindicated on the grounds of fair and just interpretation. Perhaps an impartial and cautious inquirer, supposed to know nothing of the prophetic characters of the Messiah except what is here declared, would think it expedient to suspend his judgment, and to pursue his investigation in the hope of finding some RECONCILING PRINCIPLE, which might shew the compatibility of these vast extremes in the same subject, and thus rationally unite the dependence and the supremacy.

Jesus certainly proposed this passage, as involving his enemies in an unanswerable difficulty. “How, then, doth David, by the Spirit, call him Lord, saying, ‘Jehovah said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?’ If David then call him Lord, how is he

his son?"* This difficulty is not removed by saying, with the Calm Inquirer, that David in prophetic vision saw things future as if they were actually present.† For this answer proceeds on a wrong assumption of the point under consideration. Had the question been, How could David speak of the Messiah, many ages before he had existence? this supposed answer would have been appropriate. But it is evident that the perplexity, which Jesus put upon his opponents, lay in the fact of David's representing the Messiah, who was confessedly his own descendant, as being *his Superior, his Sovereign*. I cannot perceive that it would have been "the proper answer," or any answer at all, to the question founded on this statement, to say "that the Psalmist was transported in vision to the age of the Messiah, and speaks as though he were contemporary with Christ." Yet this is all that the writer advances to nullify whatever argument might be deduced from this passage, in favour of the supposition of a superior nature in the Messiah of whom David prophesied.

* Matt. xxii. 43—45. *Impr. Vers.*

† "If this Psalm is a prophecy of Christ, and if our Lord is not merely arguing with the Jews upon their own principles, as in the case of demoniacs, Matt. xii. 27, the proper answer to this question seems to be, that the Psalmist was transported in vision to the age of the Messiah, and speaks as though he were contemporary with Christ. This mode of writing was not unusual with the prophets. See Isaiah liii. David, like Abraham, was permitted to see the day of Christ. John viii. 56."—*Calm Inquiry*, p. 271.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

SECT. XVII.

 Note [A] p. 257.

L. 1, 9. *Adon* and *Adonai* denotes a Sovereign, one who exercises a sole dominion. It is applied to a husband, father, master of a family, teacher, or magistrate, and very frequently to the Supreme Ruler. L. 5 and 6 (v. 3.) are thus translated by Dr. Kennicott, on the authority of the Syriac, Lxx. and Arabic :

“ With thee shall be royalty, in the day of thy power ;
 “ In majesty and holiness from the womb :
 “ Before the morning star, I have begotten thee.”

But I cannot venture to deviate so far from the Hebrew, which, though somewhat involved, presents, to attentive consideration, a good and noble sense. Bishop Lowth, with strong examples of such a construction, maintains an ellipsis of לו before כח, producing the sense above adopted. “ *Præ rore, qui ex utero auroræ prodit, ros tibi erit prolis tuæ ; copiosior nimirum et numerosior.*—Roris autem imago significat fecunditatem, multitudinem, copiam fecundantem (conf. Mich. vi. 7.): numerosa tibi nascetur proles, et numerosam tibi sobolem porro propagabit.” *Thy youthful progeny shall be to thee as a dew, exceeding, in number and abundance, the dew which issues from the*

womb of the morning dawn.—The figure of the dew denotes fruitfulness, multitude, and such abundance as produces further fruitfulness: (compare Mich. vi. 7.) to thee shall be born a numerous race, and that again shall produce to thee an abundant progeny.” *De Sacra Poesi Hebr.* præl. x.

The principal difficulty lies in determining to whom the address is made in L. 9. As it is well known that many of the Psalms are written in the dramatic form, it seems very probable that here the poet turns to Jehovah, as distinguished from Adonai in L. 1. Kennicott and Horsley were disposed to insert *Jehovah*, or *God*, as the nominative, and make *Adonai* the vocative. “In the first verse, ‘the Lord’ is distinguished from Jehovah, and placed at his right hand. It is difficult to believe that at so small a distance in the same Psalm, both the titles and the situations should be interchanged, viz. Jehovah called the Lord, and placed at the Lord’s right hand. I am, therefore, much inclined to indulge in a conjecture, which Dr. Kennicott, too, seems to have entertained, that the word יהוה or אלהים, hath been lost out of the text after the word ימינך, and should be restored.”—*Horsley’s Psalms*, vol. ii. p. 256.

SECT. XVIII.

THE LORD; THE KING; INFINITELY HOLY; JEHOVAH.

Is. vi. 1, 2, 3, 5.

—— “I saw the Lord [Adonai] seated upon a high and exalted throne, and his beams filling the temple. Seraphs stood on high before him,—— and one to the other cried and said, “Holy, holy, holy, Jehovah of hosts! The whole earth is full of his glory.”——And I said, “Alas for me!——the King, Jehovah of hosts, mine eyes have seen!——”

“THESE words said Isaiah, when he saw HIS glory, and spake concerning HIM;”* that is, the Messiah, as the context in the evangelist proves, and as indeed is generally admitted.† In narrating this vision, the prophet denominates the person whose glory he beheld, ADONAI, as the Messiah is so distinguishingly styled in Psalm cx. but he, not less explicitly, attributes to him the

* John xii. 41.

† The *Zohar* of R. Simeon ben Jochai (see the note on Gen. xlix. 10), says, in an incidental reference to this passage;——“The tradition is that, in every place where ” יהוה occur, there [is meant] the Shechinah.” *Zohar in Gen. ap. Schættg. Hor. Hebr. et Talm.* tom. ii. 158. “And this to this [יהוה ליהוה] cried, &c. This [יהוה] with the Holy and Blessed God, one: This [יהוה] with the Shechinah, one: and all, Jehovah.”—P. 159.

supreme and incommunicable name of deity. The conclusion seems inevitable, that either the language of prophecy is blameably and dangerously incorrect, or that the Messiah is indeed JEHOVAH of hosts.

Some have affirmed that the pronouns in the passage of John, refer to the Almighty Father, because "the Lord," in v. 38, is the nearest antecedent.* But this proceeds upon a misapprehension. The appropriate use of the pronoun in question,† is to mark the person or thing which is the principal subject of the discourse. If it were possible for any one to read the whole preceding connection, and have any doubt that Christ is that subject, his doubt could not but be dissipated by the next sentence: "Yet many even of the rulers believed on HIM."

Others have preferred to say that the demonstrative "these things," or "these words," in the Evangelist refer, not to the quotation immediately preceding, but to the first passage quoted, "Lord, who hath believed our report?"—But this is a purely arbitrary and violent construction. On all the principles of grammar and the common use of language, the reference *may* indeed include both the passages, but *must* refer to the latter as the immediate and necessary object.

* *Enjediní Expl. Locorum V. and N. T.* p. 233.

† 'Αυτός.

The Calm Inquirer acquiesces in another solution: "the prophet saw, that is, foresaw, the glory of Christ, as Abraham saw, *i. e.* foresaw, his day: John viii. 56."*

But, 1. this assertion is purely arbitrary, and is unsupported by attempt at proof.

2. There is no parallelism between the case of Isaiah, in this vision, and that of Abraham. Abraham "eagerly desired† to see the day" of Christ; "and he did see it, and rejoiced." No particular time or manner is specified of the desire or the vision. The "day of Christ," or period of his ministry and of the gospel dispensation, was a future event, and could be seen only in some prophetic representation; and many such representations were made to Abraham. But the vision of Isaiah furnishes no appearance in the circumstances, nor the slightest intimation in the description, of any thing future: for the obduracy of the Jewish people, though afterwards it became justly chargeable on the contemporaries of Jesus, is in the original passage plainly a matter of present fact, not of prediction. The notion of *foreseeing* the glory of Christ is a mere pretence, invented before either Grotius or Dr. Clarke,

* "Dr. Clarke, after Grotius, and with him all the Unitarians, understand the evangelist as affirming, that the prophet saw, &c."—*Calm Inquiry*, p. 213.

† Ἠγαλλιάσατο, see Schleusner.

by the Polish Socinians, in order to serve a system.*

3. Granting it, however, this notion does not serve its purpose. If any words are clear and definite, those here used are so, to express, that the object presented in vision to the prophet, whether seen or foreseen, was the glory of the Lord JEHOVAH, the Being whom the hosts of heaven adore. It would be useless to reason with any one who could read the passage, and deny this.†

We find, then, that the apostle John did not hesitate to make a direct application to the person of his Lord and Master, of the loftiest style of Deity that the Old Testament could furnish.

* “Ita ergò dicetur hic Esaias vidisse gloriam, id est, prophetâsse de gloriâ : non quòd tunc viderit, sed quòd prædixerit, gloriam Christi. Qui sensus et probus, et nobis non est contrarius.” “Thus Isaiah will here be said to have seen the glory, that is to have prophesied about it; not that he then saw, but foretold, the glory of Christ, Which is a good sense, and not contrary to our sentiments.” *Enjedinî Expl. Locorum*, p. 233.

† The same objections lie against the passage from Clarke, referred to by Mr. B. and transcribed as if oracular in the *Annot. on the Impr. Vers.* It is evasive, arbitrary, incongruous, and inadequate to its intention.

SECT. XIX.

IMMANUEL.

Is. vii. 14.—“ Nevertheless, the Lord himself will give you
“ a sign : Behold ! The young virgin has conceived ; and she
“ shall bring forth a son, and shall call his name Immanu-El.
“ [God with us.]”*

THIS passage is adduced in the Gospel of Matthew, as having been fulfilled in the formation of the human body of Christ, out of the established course of nature : but, to discover the mode of fulfilment, and the principle on which the correspondence is founded between the prophetic declaration and the circumstances of the Saviour's birth, is attended with considerable difficulty. It seems to be as clear as words can make it, that the son promised was born within a year after the giving of the prediction ; that his being so born, at the assigned period, was the “ sign” or pledge, that the political deliverance announced to Ahaz should certainly take place ; and that such deliverance would arrive, before this child should have reached the age in which children are commonly able to discriminate the kinds of food.

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

When it is contended that this is a **DIRECT** prophecy of the Messiah, the question arises, How an event, which would not happen till more than seven hundred years had elapsed, could be a *sign*, pledge, or assurance, of another event which was to take place within two, or at the utmost three, years?—This appears to be not merely a difficulty, but a plain, palpable, and insuperable objection. The most plausible solution that has been attempted, so far as I can learn, is this: that, since the promise of the Messiah in the fulness of time to be born, included an assurance of the preservation of the Jewish nation and the royal house of David, till that time; that promise was, by inference, a sign of deliverance from the present Syrian invasion.* But it is obvious that—

1. It is not likely that the prospect of an event so remote, and in which the irreligious mind of Ahaz could not feel a proper interest, could be to him a pledge of security under a present and most terrifying danger. “His heart, and the heart of his people were agitated, as the trees of the forest are agitated by the wind.”† It is more probable that such a man as Ahaz would give credit to the word of the prophet in relation to the immediate deliverance, than that he would confide in the promise of an event immensely remote from his time, and little congruous with his habits of mind.

* See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

† V. 2.

2. In fact, the nation of Judah and the royal family were, after this time, repeatedly subjected to successful invasion, and to every calamity short of absolute extermination. Had Ahaz, therefore, concluded that he and his country were safe from the imminent ruin, because his line would certainly be preserved till the coming of the Messiah, he would have drawn an unwarrantable conclusion.

3. The terms of the prediction seem to define its application to circumstances existing at the time, or speedily to exist. The demonstrative term, "*The virgin*," naturally points out some young female, known to the parties addressed, and probably present on the occasion. It is also as clearly declared, that the child, when born, should be nourished with the preparation then commonly given to infants in that country, till he should become capable of distinguishing correctly between the bad and the good sorts of food; but that, before that time, the country of the invaders should itself be ruined and deserted.* Some, indeed, understand this part of the passage as expressing the sentiment, that the

* V. 15, 16. It is worthy of observation, that there is a special reason for mentioning the apparently trivial circumstance of the particular food on which the infant was to be nourished, cream sweetened with honey. Those articles being the produce, the one of the meadows, and the other of the mountainous parts, of Judea, the assurance that an uninterrupted supply of them should be obtained, implied that Jerusalem would not be blockaded, and that a free communication would be kept up with the country.

deliverance of the country would be effected within an *equal* period to that which would, in the eighth century afterwards, elapse from the birth of the Messiah to his attaining the discretion of childhood. But this gloss appears so far-fetched, so evidently made to serve the hypothesis, and so manifestly weak, that one would regret to see any good cause burdened with such an argument.

On the other hand, the words of the evangelical historian are such as do not comport with the mere application of a passage in the way of resemblance or accommodation. "All this took place in order that [the declaration] might be completed which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold the virgin shall be pregnant, and shall bring forth a son ; and they shall call his name Emmanuel."* This passage comes under the class of prophetic testimonies which had a primary, but inferior and partial, reference to some proximate person or event ; but had another and a DESIGNED reference to some remoter circumstance which, when it occurred, would be the *real* FULFILMENT, answering every feature and FILLING UP the entire extent, of the original delineation.

Upon this principle of "a springing and germinant accomplishment," it appears to me that the semblance of opposition between the two passages

* Matt. i. 22, 23. The authenticity of the portion from which this is cited, will be considered in its place.

may be removed, and the difficulties rationally explained.

1. I conceive that the divine declaration was calculated for two classes of persons, and therefore intended to comprize two very different objects. The first class consisted of Ahaz and his family, together with those among the Jews whose minds regarded only temporal enjoyments, and whose wishes rose no higher than to a political deliverance. The other was the class of pious persons, who knew the value of spiritual blessings, and who regarded the promises and the providence of God with an especial view to the consolation and redemption of Israel by the Messiah.

To the former description of persons, the birth of a male child, at the close of the usual period of gestation reckoned from the giving of the prediction, and born of the person distinctly pointed out,—would be a manifest proof of divine omniscience and agency, and would be a sufficient SIGN to ensure their reliance on the accomplishment of the rest of the prediction within the specified time.

The other class, aided by their knowledge of divine truth and grace so far as then made known by revelation, *might* attach to the proximate design of the expressions, a reference to their most exalted hopes, and an assurance that God would

“raise up a horn of salvation in the house of his servant David, as he had spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets.” This supposition is rendered the more probable, by the consideration that it was the usual custom of the Jewish prophets, and particularly of Isaiah, when commissioned to administer encouragement to their countrymen, under some actual or threatened calamity, to derive the chief topics of consolation from the great “hope of Israel,” the promise of the Messiah.

2. For the reasons already stated, it appears necessary to admit that the definitive appellation, “The virgin,” was at the moment applied to a known individual who, at the proper time afterwards, became the mother of a distinguished child. Abrabanel and other Jewish writers maintain this, and suppose the person to have been the wife of Isaiah; but, as is well known, the generality of Christian interpreters reject any such opinion. To me, I confess, the most probable conjecture is that the person was the queen of Ahaz; to whom, I further conjecture, that he had then been just married, and that she was at the time beginning to be pregnant with a son, who proved a blessing to his country, and a signal honour to the house of David, namely the pious and upright Hezekiah.*

3. It is admitted on all sides that the declaration, “she shall call his name Immanu-El,” is ex-

* See Note [C] at the end of this Section.

pressive of a fact, as a commemorative title.* It does not appear to have been the proper name of any person: and certainly it was not given to Jesus of Nazareth, as a name, either by his friends or by any others. The meaning, therefore, of such an expression must be deduced from the circumstances of its application. In what I suppose to have been the primary and inferior reference, it would express no more than that, in the existing distresses of Judea and Jerusalem, GOD would be WITH THEM as their Almighty Protector. In this acceptation it is most clearly repeated in a following part of the context, which again affirms the signal overthrow of the two invading powers. “Form your counsels; and they shall be defeated: issue your orders; and they shall not stand: because GOD IS WITH US.”† But, by the same rule of interpretation, the application of the expression to the Messiah must be governed, and the sense which it yields be ascertained, by our previous knowledge concerning the person, office, and circumstances of HIM who was to be the Messiah. If, from other evidence, it shall have satisfactorily appeared that HE is a Divine Person, then may this descriptive appellation be understood as declaring, not only that the protection and favour of God abide with his church in a distinguished manner under the administration of the Messiah; but that, in the most full and

* Instances of this usage, or allusions to it, occur in Is. lxii. 4. lv. 13. lxv. 15, 16. Ezek. xlviii. 35.

† Ch. viii. 10. Literally,—“because Immanu-El.”

literal sense, He who was manifested in the flesh and born of the virgin, has a superior nature, and is "over all, God blessed for ever." .

Of this point, however, the present passage, according to the view here given of it,* is only an accessory and corroborative proof, and cannot be regarded as an independent evidence.

* See Note [D] at the end of this Section.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. XIX.

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Note [A] p. 266.

לכן “ Nevertheless:” *Kennic Serm.* 1765. *Pocock on Mic.* v. 3. *Nihilominus tamen: Noldii Partic.* No. 6.

חַעֲלָמָה with the Emphatic ה must certainly, by the rules of the Hebrew language, be rendered “ *The young virgin*” or “ *This young virgin*,” with a definite reference; as in the Lxx. and Matt. i. 23. ἡ παρθένος. See *Joh. Michaelis Lexicon Partic. Hebr. Schultens Inst. ad Fund. Ling. Hebr.* p. 251. *Kennic. Serm. Note* 29.

The substantive חַעֲלָמָה occurs but seven times in the O. T. in all of which places (for Prov. xxx. 19. is evidently not an exception, though by some pretended to be so) it undoubtedly denotes a *YOUNG woman* who is properly and strictly a *virgin*. But whether, from this paucity of instances, we are warranted to regard the latter part of this explanation as *essentially* included in the meaning, appears to me doubtful, for these reasons:

1. As it is unquestionably formed, as a regular feminine, from חַעֲלָמָה a *young man in the prime or first bloom of youth*; its signification, by fair analogy, should be a *young woman just arrived at a marriageable age*.

2. The addition to the term in Gen. xxiv. 16. seems to prove that it does not, *of itself and necessarily*, signify what is com-

monly supposed. "The more precisely to express the state of virginity, the scripture often adds to the words *maid* or *virgin*, these or such like words; *Neither had any man known her.*" *Cramer's Conc. on the word VIRGIN.*

3. The reasons submitted in the ensuing remarks on the passage under consideration, make it appear probable, if not absolutely certain, that the word, though generally denoting a young virgin in the strict sense, was also applied (by a national courtesy, perhaps,) to a young woman of high rank very recently married. So the English word, *Bride*, strictly denoting a female in the period from the solemnization to the consummation of her marriage, is generally extended to an application through several days or even weeks.

4. Though the remains of the Hebrew language furnish only the etymological analogy mentioned above (No. 1.), we have another in the cognate Syriac verb, in *Pael*, ܥܠܡܐ to become a youth, i. e. to arrive at the age of puberty; and in *Ethpeel*, ܥܠܡܐ (Rev. xiv. 18. for ἀκμάζω) to become ripe, or applied to mankind, to become marriageable.

I decline to lay any stress on the opinions of Jewish philologists since the Christian era, because they were probably influenced by party views of hostility to Christianity. But the fact ought not to be omitted, that Trypho, in Justin's Dialogue (p. 200, ed. Jebb), and Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion (*Euseb. Dem. Ev. vii. 1.*) translate מַעֲלָמָה by ἡ νεάνις, *the damsel*; and that Abrabanel maintains "puerum eodem sensu מַעֲלָמָה et puellam מַעֲלָמָה vocari, sive virgo sit, sive maritata, sive uxor, sive innupta; cum hæc vox non alium nisi ad ætatem respectum habeat."—*S. Andreae Diss. ad Es. vii. 14. § 20.*

וְהָרָה has conceived, or it may be taken as a participle, is *conceiving*; but, in the strict construction of the word, it cannot be a future.

וְקָרָא may be either *she shall call*, or *thou wilt call*. The former appears preferable by the rule of apposition.

Note [B] p. 267.

To strengthen this argument, it has been maintained that the sign was *not intended* for Ahab, but for his family, or rather his

remote descendants. The learned Galatinus (an unhandsome copyist, by the way, of Porchet and Raymundus Martini; see *Christoph. Cartwrighti Annot. in Gen. ii. 4.*) asserts this, and some writers have gravely applauded his sagacity for so doing.

“The remoteness of the time is no objection; since a remorative sign [i. e. one which proposes a future event as the evidence of the character of a preceding one; for example, 1 Kings xxii. 28.] though placed at a great distance, has the same reference to a past event as a prognostic sign has to the future. And indeed it was proper that this sign should be put at so great a distance of time, in order that Ahaz, who had disbelieved the simple word of God, might receive a sign whose remoteness from his own times would be in proportion to his unbelief. His future posterity were the persons who were eventually to see it. The sign, therefore, was not given to him, but to the house of David.” *Galatin. de Arcanis Catholicae Veritatis*; vii. 15.

Note [C] p. 271.

The great objection urged by Abrabanel, Socinus, Kennicott, and others, is that, according to the annals of the kingdom of Judea (2 Kings xvi. 2. xviii. 2.), Hezekiah was ten years old when this prophecy was delivered, in the second year of the reign of Ahaz. But if the numeral \beth *twenty*, in 2 Kings xvi. 2. and 2 Chron. xxviii. 1. on which this computation rests, be admitted as correct, it will follow that Ahaz was only *eleven* years old at the birth of his son!—It is well known that there are several inaccuracies in the numbers of the Old Testament, particularly in the later historical books, producing palpable inconsistencies. It was next to inevitable that such mistakes would be committed by copyists; since, in the most ancient manuscripts, numbers were expressed by single letters, not by words at length as in the printed Hebrew bibles. (*Tychsen de Codicibus Hebr. V. T. Rostock, 1772, p. 239.*) In this case, it is probable that \beth 20, has crept in for \beth 30. The excellent Vitringa admits the probability of some corruption, but suggests no emendation. If this be allowed, the time of the birth of Hezekiah will sufficiently coincide with the circumstances before us.

Note [D] p. 273.

This view certainly appears to me the most rational, and the least embarrassed, of any that I have met with. The principal objection to it, I apprehend, arises from the extended sense which it obliges us to give to the appellative *עלמה*. If to any this should appear an insuperable difficulty, perhaps they may not be displeased with a statement of Dr. Kennicott's hypothesis.

He conceives that "the text contains *two* distinct prophecies; each literal, and each to be understood in one sense only; the first relating to Christ, the second to Isaiah's son." The one is contained in v. 13, 14, and 15; and the other in v. 16. Dr. K. paraphrases them thus:

I. "Fear not, O house of David, the fate threatened you: God is mindful of his promise to your Father, and will fulfil the same in a very wonderful manner: Behold! a virgin (rather the virgin the only one thus circumstanced) shall conceive, and bear a son; which son shall therefore be, what no other has been or shall be, the seed of the woman, here stiled *THE VIRGIN*: and this son shall be called (*i. e.* in scripture language he shall be) *IMMANUEL*, God with us: but this great Person, this God visible amongst men, introduced into the world thus, in a manner that is without example, shall be truly man: he shall be born an infant, and as an infant shall he be brought up: for butter and honey (rather milk and honey) shall he eat; he shall be fed with the common food of infants, which in the East was milk mixed with honey, till he shall know (not, that he may know, as if such food was to be the cause of such knowledge, but) till he shall grow up to know how to refuse the evil and choose the good."

II. "*But before THIS child [pointing to his own son] shall know to refuse the evil and chuse the good; the land that thou abhorrest, shall be forsaken of both her kings.*"

"—— *זנוער* should be rendered, *THIS child*:—a son of Isaiah, Shear-jashub; whom God had commanded the prophet to take with him; but of whom no use was made, unless in the application of these words; whom Isaiah might now hold in his arm; and to whom therefore he might point with his hand when he addressed himself to Ahaz, and said, But before this

child shall grow up to discern good from evil; the land, that thou abhorrest, shall be forsaken of both her kings."

"The child's name is evidently prophetic; for it signifies, *a remnant, or the remainder, shall return*. This prophecy was soon after fulfilled. And therefore this son, whose name had been so consolatory the year before, was with the utmost propriety brought forth now, and made the subject of a second prophecy—namely, that before that child, then in the second year of his age, should be able to distinguish natural good from evil, before he should be about four or five years old; the lands of Syria and Israel, spoken of here as one kingdom on account of their present union and confederacy, should be forsaken of both their kings: which, though at that time highly improbable, came to pass about two years after; when those two kings, who had in vain attempted to conquer Jerusalem, were themselves destroyed, each in his own country." *Kennicott's Sermon on Is. vii. 13—16. Oxf. 1765.*

I beg leave also to recommend to the reader's consideration the following passages from two of the most rational, moderate, and candid among the German scripture critics.

"That this passage has a respect to the Messiah, both the terms of the passage and the testimony of St. Matthew (i. 23.) require us to admit. I am aware, indeed, that a late English writer, one Williams, if I mistake not,* to escape the difficulties of this passage, has preferred to reject as spurious the first two chapters of Matthew. But a thinking man will employ every fair means of restoration, rather than have recourse to the desperate measure of excision. Commentators of this more sober description, though adopting different opinions, have proved that a respect to the Messiah may be justly attached to these words, either, as some maintain, *properly and directly*; or, according to the larger number, by a *symbolical allusion* to the birth of the Blessed Redeemer. I shall sketch the arguments on each side.

* Thus slightly does the German critic speak of the late Dr. John Williams, of Sydenham. His pamphlet was entitled, *A Free Enquiry into the Authenticity of the i. and ii. Chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel*; London, 1771, and 2d. ed. 1789.

“ Those who affirm that the passage refers *directly* to the Messiah chiefly rest their opinion upon (1.) the noun *מָשִׁיחַ* which they contend can be applied only to a miraculous event: (2.) the actual fulfilment of the prediction, which cannot be pretended in any other than in Christ, and which the testimony of inspiration expressly affirms, not merely comparing but arguing, ‘ this came to pass, *וַיָּבֹא* IN ORDER THAT the word might be fulfilled:’ (3.) the name IMMANUEL, which, they affirm, cannot be applied to any mere human being: (4.) the supposed allusion to this passage in Mic. v. 1—3.: (5.) the scope of the prophet, who by announcing the future nativity of the Messiah as a descendant of the house of David, afforded to the distracted monarch an assurance that the royal family should infallibly be preserved.— See *Crusius’s Gnomon*, *Bp. Lowth*, &c. &c.

“ The other hypothesis maintains that the *sign*, promised by the prophet, actually took place at the time; namely that a virgin (either shortly after married to some person, perhaps to Isaiah himself, or in some preternatural way), did bring forth a son, to whom the name Immanuel was given, as a figure and assurance of *God being with them* by his almighty protection. This they support by these considerations: (1.) Another instance of prophetic significancy in marriages, and in the births and names of children; Hos. i. ii. iii. [Is. viii. 1—4, is more to the purpose.] (2.) The circumstances, which necessarily require an application to the then existing time; for example, v. 15, compared with 21: (3.) The design of the prophet; which was to shew to the distressed and distrustful king, that, in this extremity of his affairs, there was no reason to despair, and that the country should not be subdued. This, they suppose, the prophet declares by a significant name, to shew that Judæa was not abandoned, but that, according to the signification of the word IMMANUEL, God was on its side; and he adds a promise that, within so many years as usually elapse between the birth of a child and its early attainments of knowledge and conversation, the two monarchs who were so formidable to the Jews would be driven from their thrones. No person, say they, could conceive the hope of speedy deliverance from the prophecy of a Messiah to be born of a virgin seven hundred years after.—The apprehension was not for the extermination of the

royal family, but for the ruin of the nation. The assurance of the Messiah was satisfactory against the former apprehension: but it was no security against the latter, the evil really in question. The kingdom both could have been ruined, and in fact was so, long before the birth of the Messiah. These interpreters add, that another of the prophet's children, by having a significant name, was a figure of the near destruction of the same two kingdoms, those of Israel and Syria; ch. viii. 3. and that he therefore justly declared that his children were *for signs*: viii. 18. *Faber's Notes* in the German transl. of *Harmar's Observations. Isenbiehl's New Essay on the Prophecy of Immanuel*, 1778. But Professor Isenbiehl does not admit the symbolical sense." *Doederlein's Version and Notes on Isaiah*; Altorf, 1780, p. 30—33.

"I cannot pass over the late Essay, &c. of Prof. Isenbiehl of Mentz, in which that learned writer labours hard to prove that this prophecy has no reference to the miraculous birth of the Messiah, and that the citation of it by Matthew is nothing but an accommodation, or a comparison of two similar events. The learning, diligence, and impartiality of this gentleman are entitled to honour: and I sincerely lament the cruel persecution which he has suffered in chains and a dungeon, for his sentiments on this question of theological criticism.—But to his hypothesis I can by no means assent. The allegation of this passage by Matthew appears to me to be very different from an accommodation, or comparison of similar events. The mode of citation which the evangelist uses (i. 22. 'All this came to pass, IN ORDER THAT the word might be fulfilled'—&c.) is manifestly a formula for an argument, not for a comparison; and is extremely different from the other mode often used by the sacred writers of the N. T. (for example, ii. 17. 'Then was fulfilled the word'—) which, and similar phrases, I acknowledge to have been frequently used when only an accommodation is intended.—Though, on account of the allegation by Matthew, I conceive that this prophecy of Isaiah respects the nativity of the Messiah from a virgin, yet I regard this sense as belonging to the words of the prophet, not literally, but TYPICALLY. Those who explain it in this application literally, are reduced to constructions extremely forced, and to which the whole context is repugnant.

It is clear that the prophet promises a sign to be very shortly given, from which Ahaz was to know that his deliverance would very shortly take place. Such was not the promise of the Messiah, to be born of a virgin above seven hundred years after. The solutions which have been devised for answering this objection, are extremely improbable, and manifestly wrest the prophet's words.—I think, then, the weight of evidence to be in favour of those who interpret the passage thus: that the prophet pointed out some virgin who was present and well known to all the persons addressed; that he predicted that she should, in a miraculous manner, bring forth a son, for a confirmation of the promise given; and that this miracle, while it *immediately* respected the times of the prophet, was a TYPE of the birth of Christ of the Virgin Mary.—As the brazen serpent was a type of the crucifixion of Christ, and Jonah of his being three days in the grave; is it incredible that God should have been pleased thus to prefigure his miraculous birth?—” *Dathii Prophetæ Majores*; Halæ, 1785, p. 22—25.

SECT. XX.

JEHOVAH, THE OBJECT OF CONFIDENCE AND OF REVERENCE.

Is. viii. 13, 14.

1. To Jehovah of hosts himself pay holy homage,
Even Him your fear, and Him your dread :
And He shall be for a sanctuary,
And for a stone of judicial plague, and for a rock of ruin,
5. To both the houses of Israel ;
For a snare and for a net,
To the inhabitant of Jerusalem.

THE middle clauses of this passage are certainly introduced by the apostles Peter and Paul, with an explicit application to Christ.* It may, however, be said, that the application is only in the way of allusion and accommodation : and it is admitted that examples of such allusive citations do occur in the New Testament. But this admission must be limited by the principles of reason and religion. We cannot carry it so far, as to impugn the good sense or the piety of the sacred writers, if we even did not regard them as inspired. It was one of the first doctrines of their

* Rom. ix. 33. 1 Pet. ii. 8.

religion, both as Jews and as Christians, that the "things of God" are ever to be treated with reverence, and that, in no respect, is "his glory to be given to another." Can we suppose that they would, without scruple and without any qualifying intimations, take up the attributes and descriptions appropriated to the Great God, and promptly apply them to an inferior being, to a mere fellow-mortal? Yet this strange inadvertence, to give it the mildest name, we must impute to "the apostles of the Lord and Saviour,"—men who claimed to "have the mind of Christ," "and to speak in the words which the Holy Spirit taught;"—men who demanded assent to their testimony, under the solemn declaration, that "he who despiseth, despiseth not man but God!" If we cannot accept this side of the alternative, the remaining part is that *there was a sense* in which the awful peculiarities of the Deity might *strictly* and *properly* be attributed to the Messiah, and that the inspired apostles felt no restraint or difficulty in making such attributions.*

* The excellent and learned Vitringa offers a body of argument to shew that the paragraph (Is. viii. 14,—ix. 6.) refers immediately and exclusively to the Messiah. His principal reasons may be thus reduced to a bare sketch.

1. Express N. T. authority. Luke ii. 34. Rom. ix. 33. 1 Pet. ii. 7. Heb. ii. 13. In the latter passage, v. 18, is adduced as a basis of doctrine, to prove that the Messiah must partake the nature of those whom he came to redeem. This of necessity requires that the passage should have an original reference to him.

2. The just interpretation of the terms will apply naturally to

SECT. XXI.

THE WONDERFUL, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE ETERNAL, THE
SOVEREIGN.

Is. ix. 5, 6.

1. For a child is born to us ;
A son is given to us :
And the sovereignty is upon his shoulder ;
And his name is called, Wonderful, Counsellor,
5. God the Mighty, Everlasting, Prince of peace :
To the extent of [his] sovereignty, and to [his] peace, [shall
be] no end,
Upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom,
To fix it and to establish it, in judgment and in righteousness,
From henceforth and for ever.*

THE connection of this distinguished passage, the citation of a part of that connection in the New Testament, as an express prediction of

Christ and his dispensation, but to any other objects only in a forced and tortuous manner.

3. The apostrophe in v. 16. definitely respects the doctrine and grace of the Messiah communicated to mankind.

4. The analogous prophecy ; ch. xxviii. 13, 16.

5. The confessions of ancient Rabbinical writers that the Messiah is the subject of this portion of the prophet. See *Vitr. Comm.* in loc.

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

Christ,* and the terms of the description so absolutely exclusive of any other application,—leave the rational and impartial reader in no doubt of its true meaning. Few have been perverse or hardy enough to reject this application. Interpreters ancient and modern, Jewish and Christian, and of almost every sect and community, have agreed in regarding it, to use the language of Dr. Priestley, as “*evidently* a reference to the MESSIAH.”†

Is it, then, extravagant to affirm that, if there be any dependence on the clear meaning of words, the Messiah is here drawn in the opposite characters of humanity and DEITY;—the nativity and frailty of a mortal child, and the incommunicable attributes of the Omnipotent and Eternal God?—Justly is his name called WONDERFUL.

* Matt. iv. 14—16.

† Notes on SS. in loc.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

SECT. XXI.

Note [A] p. 284.

מַשְׂרָה strictly denotes the government of a sovereign, or absolute prince.—אל גִּבּוֹר most exactly, *God the valiant*. Considerable pains have been taken to dilute the strength of this epithet. Grotius, understanding the passage primarily of Hezekiah, forces it into a construction in *regimine* with the preceding word, and would render them, *The consuler of the mighty God*. But יוֹעֵץ signifies a *giver of counsel*, not a *solicitor* of it. Enjedin, acute and diligent as he was, observes deep silence on this whole passage. Rosenmüller, jun. says, “אל hic est *fortis, potens, heros*, ut Job xli. 17. 2 Reg. xxiv. 15.” He overlooks the tautology which he would incur; and in his two pretended instances the word actually does not exist.—Mr. Dodson makes up a reading partially and arbitrarily from the Vatican copy of the Lxx. and the Heb. *ex hypothesi*:—“his name shall be called, The Messenger of the great design, the Father of the age,” &c. But he overlooks the great variations of reading and the palpable errors in the Greek version of this prophet, which render it of little value in criticism; and he rejects the clear reading of the Heb. without reason.—Dr. Priestley, in his Notes on SS. follows Mr. Dodson.—The reading of the Heb. is most clearly supported by the Targum, the Arabic, and the Vulgate; that is by all the ancient versions except the Lxx.

The Syriac has not ܡܐ, but reads thus,—“his name shall be called [Object of] Admiration, Counsellor, the Mighty Everlasting God, the Prince of Peace.” With respect to the Lxx. the perplexed state of its text will appear from the following view of its three families of descent.

“For a child is born to us, a son also is given to us, on whose shoulder is the dominion, and his name is called, Messenger of the great counsel. For I will bring peace to the rulers, and health to him. Great is his dominion, and of his peace there is no limit, upon the throne of David and his kingdom, to regulate it, and to establish it, in judgment and in righteousness, from this time and for ever.” *Vatican*.

“For [&c. as the Vat.]—Messenger of the great counsel, Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty One, Potentate, [or, Mighty Potentate,] Prince of peace, Father of the future age. For I will bring”—[&c. nearly as the Vat.] *Alexandrine*.

“For [&c. as the Vat.]—Messenger of the great counsel, Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Potentate, Prince of peace, Father of the future age. For I will bring—”[&c. slightly varying from Vat. and Alex.] *Aldine*. So likewise the passage is cited by Eusebius, in *Dem. Ev.* lib. vii. cap. 5.

Leclerc explains the phrase, “*Divine Counsellor*, one whose counsels, that is to say, his precepts, should be divine, as they really are.” *Annot. in loc.* Dr. Lant Carpenter has also assumed this interpretation in his *Discourse* on this text, *Exeter*, 1817. He renders the whole thus, “And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor of God, Mighty, Father of the age, Prince of Peace.” The particular phrase under consideration Dr. Carpenter regards as having this import;—“*Counsellor of God*,—fully and intimately acquainted with the gracious designs,—the mind and will of God with respect to the duty and expectations of mankind;—and sent to communicate them to his fellow men.” P. 7, 13. Against this translation the following objections appear to lie.

1. The prefix ܐ before ܡܐ might have been expected, to mark its dependence on the preceding word. It does not seem likely that an exception from this usage would take place in an enumeration of appellatives, where it was otherwise impossible to

determine whether a word was independent or in regimen. In the last epithet שֶׁ-שָׁלוֹם *Prince of peace*, this is determined by the sense. In the other אֲבִי-עוֹלָם *Father of the age*, it is as certainly determined by the resumption of the third radical *Jod*. See *Schultens Inst. ad Fund. Ling. Hebr.* p. 235. *Schræder Inst.* p. 142. *Ulmæ*, 1792.

2. All the ancient versions, so far as they can be applied, are against the construction. No argument can be built upon the Septuagint. The remains of the Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion consent in making לַי independent of the preceding word, and in separating it from the following: they render it ἰσχυρὸς *strong*; and the next they make also independent, δυνατὸς and δυνάμεως *mighty*. Eusebius, by whom the fragments are preserved, adds: "The Hebrew instead of ἰσχυρὸς has ΕΛ, which signifies *God*." See *Drusius*, in the *Critici Sacri*.

3. Wherever the two words occur together they *invariably* are connected as substantive and adjective, in the same order, אֱלֹהֵי-גִבּוֹר. See the very phrase in Isaiah x. 21. and with other adjectives in Deut. x. 16. Jer. xxxii. 18. Dan. ix. 4. Nehem. ix. 32. In these and *all other* instances, לַי comes before the adjective. See *Buxtorf's* or *Taylor's Hebr. Concord.*—This single consideration convinces me that the usual rendering, *God the Mighty*, cannot be justly rejected.

אֲבִי-עוֹלָם Dathé regards this as an instance of the well known oriental idiom by which names of affinity, as *father, mother, brother, sister*, are used to designate the author or eminent possessor, of a quality or object; and therefore renders it simply *The Eternal*. See his Paraph. also *Schultens in Job.* xvii. 14. *Golii Lex. Arab.* p. 10. *Dindorf. Lex. Hebr.* Lipsiæ, 1801, p. 1. On this principle, Dr. Priestley himself says, "So here the MESSIAH is called *The Father of eternity*, his authority being designed to be of long continuance." Notes on SS. But does this comment represent the text?—Rosenmüller jun. acquiesces, and translates, *Immortal*. With apparent reluctance, he admits that the passage can refer only to the Messiah. Cocceius, Vogel, and Hensler, adopt *Father of perpetuity*. Mr. Dodson has, *Father of the age*; perhaps not

being aware that γ does not signify a limited portion of time, but absolute and indefinite duration. Bishop Lowth escapes this objection by adopting *Father of the everlasting age*.

The Chaldee Paraphrase is very observable. "The prophet speaketh to the house of David, Because a child is born to us, a son is given to us, and he taketh the law upon himself to observe it; therefore his name is called from of old, Wonderful in counsel, God the mighty, He who abideth for ever, the Messiah, whose peace shall be abundant upon us in his days."

Since the three verses preceding the passage are very unhappily translated in the authorized version, so that the connection of sentiment is quite obscured, this note may not be uselessly closed with a translation and paraphrase of them.

VERSION.

PARAPHRASE.

V. 3. Thou hast enlarged the nation; its joy thou hast increased. They rejoice in thy presence as the joy in harvest, as [warriors] rejoice in the division of spoil.

4. For the yoke which they had borne, the log [chained] on their shoulders, the sceptre of their oppressor, thou hast broken, as in the battle of Midian.

5. For all the greaves of the warriors greaved for the tumultuous fight, and the war-cloak rolled in gore, shall even be for the burning and consumption of fire.

By the coming of the Messiah, thou, O God, increasest the number and the happiness of thy faithful people, so that their exultation and triumph are raised to the highest.

Thou hast thus delivered them from the usurped dominion of sin, in a way as superior to human agency, and as clearly shewn to be by divine interposition, as when the Israelites under Gideon were delivered from the tyranny of the Midianites.

All the horrid apparatus of war shall be abolished, by the ultimate triumphs of the Messiah's benignant empire; as if utterly burned up.

SECT. XXII.

THE OFFSPRING OF JESSE.

Is. xi. 1—5, 10.

1. From the stock of Jesse though cut down, a branch shall grow ;
And from his roots a shoot shall become fruitful.
Upon him the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest :
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
5. The Spirit of counsel and strength,
The Spirit of knowledge and piety towards Jehovah ;
And it shall richly inspire him with piety towards Jehovah.
Not according to the appearance to the eyes, will he judge ;
Nor according to the report to the ears, will he reprove.
10. But with justice he will judge for the oppressed ;
And with uprightness he will reprove, for the afflicted of the earth.
For he will smite the earth with the sceptre of his mouth ;
And with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked one.
And justice shall be the girdle of his reins,
And truth the girdle of his loins.

* *

- In that day shall be a root of Jesse,
15. Which shall stand for an ensign to the peoples :
To him the nations shall seek ;
And his resting-place shall be illustrious.*

THE reference of this passage to the Messiah

* L. 1. גִּזְעוֹ denotes the stump, or bottom part of a tree, after the trunk has been hewn down, Job xiv. 8.—L. 6. 7. יִרְאֵת יְהוָה *fear of Jehovah*, is the ordinary Hebrew expression for piety or

is plainly affirmed in the Targum,* and is substantiated by a direct citation,† and by a manifest allusion,‡ in the New Testament. The terms of the passage describe him as a descendant of the house of David, to be born at the time of its extreme depression; as endowed, by the immeasurable influence of the Holy Spirit, with all holiness and wisdom; as a righteous judge and powerful sovereign; and as a benignant Saviour, readily receiving all nations under his protecting mercy. He is clearly represented as a human being, and the characters and offices so far enumerated are fairly conceivable as the attributes of a man. But another part of the description must give us pause, before we can regard its just meaning as comporting with any other than a being possessed of personal omnipotence.—“He will smite the earth with the sceptre of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked one.” Undoubtedly the instrument, symbolically called his “sceptre” and his “breath,” is his gospel, that “word of truth and

religion.—L. 17. The figure is that of a noble, spreading, tree, whose thick and extended branches furnish that shelter and place of repose which is so welcome in the burning deserts contiguous to Judea.

* “From the children of Jesse a king shall proceed, and from his children’s posterity the Messiah shall arise to greatness.” *Targ. Jonath.* on v. 1. Referring to this passage, *R. Simeon ben Jochai* says, “When the King Messiah shall be revealed, all the nations of all the world shall be gathered to him.”

† Rom. xv. 12.

‡ 2 Thess. ii. 8.

meekness of righteousness" with which "his right hand will shew awful things." But the AGENCY which wields this instrument and gives it its effect, is evidently something higher than a bare annunciation of doctrine or prophecy. It is the agency of one who has POWER to execute TO THE UTMOST the decisions of his justice. The apostle, applying this clause to the final destruction of the great corruption which should for a season deform the public state of Christianity, uses expressions which seem little compatible with the powers of any mere creature: "Then that lawless one shall be brought to view, whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the breath of his own mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of his own presence."*

* 2 Thess. ii. 8.

SECT. XXIII.

JEHOVAH, THE SAVIOUR AND SHEPHERD.

Is. xl. 3—5, 9—11.

1. A voice [of one] crying in the wilderness
Prepare a way for Jehovah !
Make level in the desert a path for our God !
Every valley shall be raised, and every mountain and hill
shall be depressed ;
5. The craggy rock shall become a level plain, and the rugged
grounds a low vale ;
And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed,
And all flesh together shall behold [it :]
For the mouth of Jehovah speaketh.
- * * *
10. Daughter of Zion, proclaiming glad tidings ! Ascend the
lofty mountain.
Daughter of Jerusalem, proclaiming glad tidings ! Lift up
thy voice with strength.
Lift up [thy voice], be not timid,
Say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God !
Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come with his strength,
15. And his arm ruling for himself.
Behold his reward is present with him,
And his work before his face.
As a shepherd to his flock, so will he be a shepherd :
With his arm he will collect the new-born lambs, and in
his bosom bear them ;
20. The ewes giving suck he will gently lead.

EVERY serious Christian will admit that the prophecy of which we have thus cited a part, expressly marks the forerunner and herald of the Messiah.* If, then, with unbiassed minds we follow the plain and natural construction of the passage, it appears an inevitable conclusion that this Messiah is characterized as the God of Israel, the Lord JEHOVAH. To rebut this conclusion, it is asserted that “John was the forerunner of the Lord their God, by being the forerunner of Jesus, the great messenger of God to mankind.†” It must be confessed, that this interpretation is not destitute of apparent reasons.‡ But, after weigh-

* “This is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight!” Matt. iii. 3. Joh. i. 23. “Thou, child, shalt be called, *the prophet of the Most High*; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways.” Luke i. 76. “Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God; and he shall go before HIM in the spirit and power of Elijah,” v. 16.

† *Calm. Inq.* p. 217. on Luke i. 16, 17. To the same effect Enjedin, p. 123—126, and the general train of Socinian writers.

‡ Chiefly resting on the principle of these texts: “I am come in my Father’s name.” Joh. v. 43. “My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me,” ch. vii. 16, and many others to the same effect.

But it should be observed, that the inferiority and delegation proper to the mediatorial *office* of Christ, is a distinct consideration from the question of his possessing, or not, a superior and divine nature; and that the office, so of course implying the inferiority of subjection and servitude, is often represented, in the New Testament, as a matter of condescension and assumption, on the part of Christ.

ing the arguments on each side, I acknowledge that the evidence in favour of the other interpretation seems to me to preponderate.

The question ought to be, which sense agrees most exactly with the language and the scope of the original prophecy. The language is abundantly plain and unambiguous. No terms could more clearly convey, that the being whose "coming" is announced with such a magnificence of joy, is Jehovah, in his own special presence, and not by a mere representative. If the scope of the place be considered, it will appear no slight incongruity that, after all the solemnity and splendour of the personage thus introduced, he should turn out to be not the Sovereign promised, but only the fellow-servant of the herald.

It is proper, also, to remark the correspondence of a discourse of our Lord with the succeeding language of the prophecy; a correspondence which, if not designed and proper, would subject the speaker to the charge of uttering highly incautious and dangerous expressions. The office and duty of rulers, in presiding over and caring for their subjects, are, indeed represented by pastoral metaphors. Moses and David in the sacred writings,* and other chieftains in the oldest records of gentile language and manners,† are called

* Is. lxiii. 11. Ps. lxxviii. 71.

† Agamemnon, Menelaus, Hector, Laertes, and many others in the Iliad and Odyssey.

the *shepherds* of their people. But it is to the distinguishing and exalted manner in which this appellation and its attributes are given to Christ, that the attention of the serious inquirer is invited. “I am the GOOD SHEPHERD: and I know my sheep and am known of mine. “As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I HAVE, which are not of this fold: them also I MUST BRING, and they shall hear my voice.—I GIVE unto them eternal life.”*—This language would ill become a merely dependent being.† It implies an actual dominion over the minds, the moral principles, and the everlasting state of mankind. It is the style of a CHIEF SHEPHERD, in whose hand it is to confer the “unfading crown of glory” on his faithful servants.‡

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

† “The Proprietor of the sheep, not a hireling: the true Messiah. Is. xl. Ezek. xxxiv.” [Ye, my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I your God; saith the Lord Jehovah.]—*Rosenm. in Joann.* x. 11,

‡ 1 Pet. v, 4.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

SECT. XXIII.

Note [A] p. 296.

Joh. x. 14—16, 27. It may be objected, that our Lord follows up this style of sovereignty with expressions of subordination and dependence: "This commandment have I received of my Father;—my Father, who gave them to me, is greater than all; and no one is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." But, in reply to this, and to the same objection under other forms, we readily say that we without hesitation admit that the Christ is the servant and messenger of the Father, and therefore officially subordinate and dependent; but that the *previous requisite* of CAPACITY and QUALIFICATION for executing the mediatorial office, is nothing less than the possession of DIVINE dignity and power. Let it not be forgotten, that the Redeemer subjoined to the declaration of his mediatorial appointment, this great assertion, "I and my Father are ONE. A oneness of *design* will not reach the evident requisites of the connection; which are to call efficaciously, to preserve infallibly, and to save eternally, all the church of God. It is manifestly a unity of *power*, and how that could exist without a UNITY of ESSENCE let the truly calm and impartial reflect.

SECT. XXIV.

BELOVED SERVANT OF GOD.

Is. xlii. 1—4.

1. Behold my servant ! I will support him.
My chosen ! The delight of my soul !
I have bestowed my Spirit upon him :
He shall bring judgment to the nations.
5. He will not be noisy, nor be clamorous,
Nor shall his voice be heard abroad.
A bruised reed he will not crush,
And faintly smoking flax he will not extinguish.
He will bring forth judgment unto [manifest] truth.
10. He will not faint, nor will he be broken down ;
Until he shall have placed judgment in the earth,
And the islands shall fix their expectations on his law.

THE Messiah is here described as the object of the most perfect divine complacency ; qualified, by the richest participation of heavenly gifts, for communicating the true religion to the world ; modest, lowly, and unassuming ; supporting and soothing the weak and afflicted ; indefatigably persevering in his arduous work of evangelizing the earth ; and finally successful in it.

If, with some interpreters, it be admitted that this description had a primary respect to Isaiah in his prophetic character; it is not the less to be maintained, from the force of the terms, the known genius of Hebrew prophecy, and the evidence of the New Testament,* that the complete application can be to none other than the Messiah. “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him!”

* Matt. xii. 18—21.

SECT. XXV.

JEHOVAH, THE SUPREME GOD, THE RIGHTEOUS, AND THE SAVIOUR.

Is. xlv. 21—25.

1. — I Jehovah, and no God besides me :
 God the righteous and the Saviour ; none except me.
 Look unto me, and receive salvation,
 All the farthest regions of the earth ;
5. For I am God, and there is none besides.
 By myself I have sworn : the just decree hath issued from
 my mouth ;
 The word shall not return [inefficient] :
 That unto me every knee shall bow,
 Every tongue shall swear [homage].
10. Of me shall it be said, “ Surely in Jehovah is righteousness
 and strength :
 “ Unto him they shall come, and all who scorn him shall be
 confounded :
 “ In Jehovah all the race of Israel shall have righteousness
 and shall triumph.”

To urge the consideration that “ we shall all
 stand before the judgment seat of Christ,” * the

* — παραστησόμεθα τῷ βήματι —. A Scottish law term
 would give a more exact translation than any English phrase
 that I am aware of : “ We shall be sisted [presented as objects
 of judicial cognizance] at the tribunal of Christ.”

apostle Paul undeniably cites and argues from this passage;—"It is written, 'As I live, saith the Lord, unto me every knee shall bow; and every tongue shall render acknowledgment to God.' So therefore every one of us shall give account of himself to God."* That here is an intended application of the passage to Christ, is at least corroborated by another reference of the apostle: "That in the name of Jesus every knee may bow, of beings in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue may acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."†

Whether, in these instances, the apostle wrote under a deliberate and solemn belief that the passage which he introduced had an original respect to the Messiah; or whether he designed only to accommodate it to his present purpose, is most properly to be ascertained by attending to the words as they stand in the prophecy, and to the argument built on them by the apostle. "The place of Isaiah," says the elder Rosenmüller, "treats of the propagation of the Jewish" [the Christian] "religion among the gentiles; and it predicts that the nations should generally own and worship the true God."‡ It appears to me to be one of those instances, characteristically numerous in this prophet, in which he makes a natural and sublime transition from near to remote objects, from earthly things to heavenly, from temporal to spi-

* Rom. 14. 11.

† Phil. ii. 10, 11.

‡ Schol. in Rom. xiv. 11.

ritual blessings. The prediction of the conquest of Babylon and the liberation of the Jews, furnishes occasion for introducing this striking section * on the vanity of idolatry, and its approaching renunciation under the influence of that pure and benign religion which should be universally diffused by the Messiah. The Person who is first addressed, and then personified, is represented in the very terms which are familiarly employed in the New Testament to designate Jesus Christ: he is the SAVIOUR, the RIGHTEOUSNESS, the STRENGTH, of his people. The clause, “unto Him they shall come,”† expresses a prophetic character of the Messiah, which is particularly represented and enlarged upon by Isaiah, in other passages; ‡—the conversion, obedience, and attachment to him, of the once benighted and idolatrous gentiles. This circumstance, though not certainly conclusive, must be allowed to have considerable weight, and not the less on account of its being of the incidental and minute kind.

The argument of the citation is plainly this. A position is to be confirmed, namely, that “we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.”

* Schol. in Rom. v. 15—25.

† In verbis עָדֵיו יָכוֹחַ putem tertiam personam impersonaliter positam esse, ut in præcedenti אָמַר, et verba esse proselytorum istorum adhortantium ad veri Dei cognitionem. *Dathii V. T.* tom v. p. 159.

‡ Is. xlix. 6—12. lv. 5.

In confirmation of this, a passage of the prophetic testimony is adduced which declares the eventual ascendancy of a GREAT BEING, in the acknowledgment of his supremacy and the reception of his doctrine among mankind. It is evident that another proposition must be supplied to make the premises complete; and the omission to mention it formally is a proof that the apostle considered it as either self-evident, or as sufficiently known and acknowledged. This prior proposition must be to this effect; that He who receives the homage of the earth in consequence of the prevailing influence of his religious doctrine, is by this circumstance declared to be the future Judge of men. Supply this assumption, and the argument is good; without it, the argument fails. But if we admit the truth of the assumption, and the conclusiveness of the reasoning, we must also admit two other points as manifestly included in that reasoning: the one, that He whose doctrine is foretold to have so extensive a triumph, and who should be hailed as the Saviour, the Righteousness, and the Strength, of those who were to be gathered unto him, in one word, the Messiah,—is in truth JEHOVAH, the ONLY GOD: the other, that He at whose tribunal we shall be presented for his awful judgment, to whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess homage, and to whom every one of us shall give account of himself,—is the same, JEHOVAH, the ONLY GOD. The former of these characters identifies itself

with all the doctrine of the New Testament concerning the work and offices of Christ as the Redeemer: the latter comports with, and is illustrated by, all those passages which teach that “all judgment is committed to the Son, that He will sit upon the throne of his glory, that all nations will be gathered before him, and that we must all appear before the judgment seat of CHRIST, that every one may receive [for] the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether good or bad.”* It is further to be observed, that this part of the conclusion does not rest upon any opinion, more or less exalted, that may be entertained on the *nature* of that judgment which the New Testament assigns to Christ (a subject which must be considered in its place); but it is valid on all hypotheses relative to that question. Be the time, the kind, and the manner of the judgment what they may, He who shall execute it is God.

From these considerations, there appears to me sufficient reason for regarding the passage now considered, as a prophecy and designed representation of the Messiah.

The interpretation proposed by Faustus Socinus,† and generally adopted by his followers, is perspicuously stated by Dr. Priestley. “The

* John v. 22. Matt. xxv. 31, 32. 2 Cor. v. 10.

† *Resp. ad Vujek.* cap iii. Arg. 9.

judgment-seat of Christ, and that of God, are the same, not because Christ is God, but because he acts in the name and by the authority of God, which is fully expressed when it is said that God will judge all the world by Jesus Christ; so that being judged by Christ and by God is in effect the same thing.* By this gratuitous assertion the difficulty is evaded; but whether it is not advanced to serve the purpose, whether it is not far-fetched while the other sense is near and obvious, and whether it duly comports with the terms and the scope of the passage, and with the argument of the citation,—the reflecting and candid reader will judge.

All the notice which the *Calm Inquiry* vouchsafes to take of these two passages of the New Testament, is in two summary annotations;† which are undoubtedly true, so far as they go, but they are totally silent on that which is the main point of the case, the reference to the prophet; and thus they leave the argument untouched.

* *Notes on Script.* vol iv. p. 330, on Rom. xiv. 12.

† “Rom. xiv. 9.—Christ is Lord of the dead, as he will be invested with authority to raise them to life, and to judge them according to their works. He is Lord of the living, as the whole human race will ultimately profess subjection to his gospel.” *Calm Inquiry*, p. 272.

“Phil. ii. 9, 10.—The learned Peirce, whose system countenanced the worship of Christ, explains this text in his paraphrase as not bearing upon that question. ‘Upon this account God has advanced him higher than before, and freely bestowed on him an authority that is superior to whatever he granted to any other: that *by virtue of the authority of Jesus* all should be constrained to submit to God.’” P. 365.

SECT. XXV.

JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Jerem. xxiii. 5, 6.

1. Behold! the days are coming, saith Jehovah,
When I will raise unto David a righteous progeny;
And he shall reign sovereign and shall act wisely,
And he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land:
5. In his days Judah shall be saved,
And Israel shall rest in security;
And this is his name, which they shall call him,
JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

A passage parallel, or nearly so : ch. xxxiii. 15, 16.

1. In those days, and in that time,
I will raise unto David a righteous progeny,
And he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.
In those days Judah shall be saved,
5. And Jerusalem shall rest in security:
And this is he who shall call to her,
JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

THE connection and manifest scope of these two passages point their reference to the Messiah : and in this reference they have been understood

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

by the general consent of Jewish* and Christian interpreters. Unless it be denied that such a reference is the intention of the passages, it will remain that the Messiah is explicitly called by the incommunicable name of the self-existent One,—JEHOVAH. To avoid this conclusion, different methods are resorted to.

Abrabenel† maintains that the title in question is the nominative of the verb, so that the sentence should be construed ;—“ And this [*viz.* righteous branch] is his name, which Jehovah our righteousness shall call him.” Grotius adopts this interpretation. ‡

Faustus Socinus makes, not the Messiah, but Israel or Judah to be the object to which the name is given, in the first instance ; and Jerusalem, in the second.§

The Rabbis Kimchi, Salomon, and Moses Gerundensis adopt a solution in which they are followed by the generality of Arian and Socinian commentators: that the title is indeed given to the Messiah, but not as a personal appellative. These writers understand it as a *descriptive* name,

* See very ample collections of these authorities in *Dassorii Diss. Rabbin. Philol.* and *Frischmuthi Diss. de Nom. Mess.* (in the *Sylloge Dissertationum Eleg.* vol. i. Amst. 1701.)

† *Comm. in Proph.* quæst. 4. ap. Frischm. c. i. § 23.

‡ *Annot. in loc.*

§ *Resp. ad Vujek*, c. vi. § 2.

declaring the blessings which Jehovah would confer under the reign and by the instrumentality of the Messiah. Of such descriptive names examples are frequent: an altar was called by Jacob, *El-Elohe-Israel*, *God, the God of Israel*; another by Moses, *Jehovah-nissi*, *Jehovah my banner*; and the name of the predicted city in Ezekiel is *Jehovah-shammah*, *Jehovah is there*.*

To the first and second of these opinions, it may be justly replied that they are unnatural constructions, contrived and forced upon the words for the mere purpose of evasion.

But the third is entitled to more respectful consideration. The fact is unquestionable that the gratitude or hope of individuals, in the ancient scriptural times, was often expressed by the imposition of significant appellations on persons or other objects, in the composition of which divine names and titles were frequently employed: these are, therefore, nothing but short sentences declarative of some blessing possessed or expected. When such names were given, the nature of the subject indubitably suggested the sense intended. It was impossible for a structure of earth or stones, or a merely human being, ever to be mistaken for the Deity; though the one might be honoured with the epithet, equivalent to the inscriptions of later times, *JEHOVAH IS MY BANNER*; or the other, as in the instance of

* Gen. xxxiii. 20. Ex. xvii. 15. Ezek. xlviii. 35.

Elijah, with the distinguished title
breviation of JEHOVAH) IS MY GOD
could never be regarded as any
memorials of piety, *because the KN*
the subject precludes misapprehensi

If, then, the person of the Messiah were indubitably ascertained to be only human, this appellation would be merely a descriptive proposition, and would be properly read with the supplement of the substantive verb, JEHOVAH *is our righteousness*: but, if, from other evidence, it were satisfactorily determined that the person of the Messiah includes a divine subsistence, the title would be applicable in its direct and strict signification, as a clear description of his person and of his official grace,—JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

So should we argue if the two suppositions were in equipoise to each other. But they are not so. Independently of all the evidence which we possess of a divine nature in the person of the Messiah, and which, being admitted on its own grounds, receives a corroboration from the passage before us; there is a consideration which especially belongs to the very phrase of this passage. What is “righteousness,” in the scriptural sense? Is it not a standing clear and unimpeached, in relation to a given standard of rectitude? As applied to an accountable subject of God’s moral government, does it not import that state of freedom from just accusation, and

compliance with just requirements, upon which the Righteous Judge can look with entire satisfaction? Now this **RIGHTEOUSNESS** is the capital blessing of the gospel; and the mode of obtaining it is the great distinction, the unique glory, of the Christian covenant. Hence Archbishop Newcome, and following him the Improved Version, generally renders that word, in the doctrinal parts of the New Testament, by the terms *justification* and *method of justification*. **THIS righteousness**, this justification, is constantly and most definitely attributed to Jesus Christ. Every other righteousness is disowned and rejected in comparison of **HIS**.* “He is the end” (scope, object, or design) “of the law, for righteousness.”† In the most emphatic sense, **HE** is the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of his people.‡

Here, then, in the harmony and unison of revelation, in the correspondence between the prophecies which foretold the gospel and the doctrines which were its completion, we find a fact of weight enough to turn the scale, and determine the reference to the *Person* of the Divine Messiah, that “this is his name which they shall call him, the **LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**.”

A general remark, connected with this particular instance, is worthy of observation. The most exalted method, within the compass of language, of attributing to any being the perfect possession

* Phil. iii. 8, 9. † Rom. x. 4. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.

of qualities or exercise of powers, is by employing the *abstract* terms of such qualities or powers, instead of the concrete. Thus, instead of saying that the Supreme Being is intelligent, benignant, and actively kind, the sublime simplicity of scripture says, God is LIGHT; God is LOVE; God is GOODNESS.* Now, the observable fact to which we have adverted is, that this style of expression is more frequently and copiously used in application to the Saviour of mankind, than in reference to any other manifestation of God. Christ is our Light, Life, Hope, Truth, Peace, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.† This is one of those circumstances in the *manner* and *spirit* of the inspired writers which cannot fail to arrest the notice of an attentive mind, a sound judgment, and an unprejudiced heart; and the careful observance of which, in their very numerous and diversified forms, combine in producing a general effect which appears to me perfectly irreconcilable with any scheme that denies the proper Deity of Christ. These sacred writers seem never to have felt the need of cautions or restrictions, when they were pouring out the fulness of their minds in *the most unmeasured greatness* of expression, on the glory of their Redeemer.

* 1 Joh. i. 5. iv. 16. Ps. cxliv. 2. But in this last passage, the word should perhaps be rendered, *my Benefactor*.

† Joh. i. 9. xiv. 6. 1 Tim. i. 1. Col. i. 27 Eph. ii. 7. 1 Cor. i. 30.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

SECT. XXV.

Note [A] p. 306.

xxiii. L. 7. יקראו *he shall call him*, or rather *he shall announce*, or *proclaim, him*: understanding, with the Rabbis Kimchi and Ben Melech, for the nominative case, *Israel* or *the church*. Or it may be the third person plural, *they shall call*, put indefinitely (as *ferunt*, *ῥιονται*, *λέγουσι*, &c. occurring also in the Biblical idiom, as in Deut. xxix. 24. Luke xvi. 9.) which is the opinion of Abrabenel and the elder Buxtorf, and the word is so pointed in Bomberg's Bible, Venice, 1525. Professor Eichhorn considers it as a sort of impersonal, like the German, *man hat genennet*, or the French *on dit*.

The difference in xxxiii. L. 6. is observable. The clause, as there given, may be read in three different ways :

1. That adopted above, which is the closest, and is sanctioned by Rabbi Alscheth, Vatablus, Sebastian Schmidt, C. B. Michaelis (the father of the late John David M.) and Dathé. It is thus rendered in the Jewish Spanish Version (Fernandez, Amst. 5486), in Cassiodore del Reyna's, and in the Dutch.

2. Understanding שמו after זה, by deriving it from the parallel passage; and so reading "and this is his name which he [or indefinitely as above] shall proclaim to her."

3. "This is the name with which she shall be called : " Our common version, the Geneva French, and Diodati's Italian. But, though the construction with ל is consistent with this sense,

the insertion of the noun supposed to be understood with *מ* can be derived only from ch. xxiii. and therefore would be *מִשְׁמֵה* *his name*, not *מִשְׁמֵהָ* *her name*. So that this reading seems to be untenable.

But it is more than probable that the original words have sustained some alteration, and that the true reading is as found by Kennicott in several MSS. and by de Rossi in one, exactly the same as in the preceding passage, ch. xxiii. 6. This is supported by the Syriac, the best of all the ancient versions.

xxiii. 5, 6. "Behold! the days are coming, saith the Lord, when I will raise up to David the Messiah of the righteous, and he shall reign sovereign and shall be prosperous, and he shall execute the judgment of truth and righteousness in the land. In his days, they of the house of Judah shall be delivered, and Israel shall dwell in safe confidence; and this is his name by which he [Israel, or indefinitely,] shall call to him, Righteousnesses shall for us be performed, from the presence of the Lord, in his days." xxxiii. 15, 16. "In those days and in that time, I will raise up to David the Messiah of righteousness; and he shall execute the judgment of truth and righteousness in the land. In those days they of the house of Judah shall be delivered, and Jerusalem shall dwell in safe confidence; and this is her name by which he shall call to her, Righteousnesses—" &c. *Targum of Jonathan.*

The Septuagint is greatly corrupted in both places. The latter clause of xxiii. 6. is thus:—"and this, his name which the Lord will call him, Josedek:" a manifest error from *Jehovah tzidkenu*, first contracted, and then taken for a proper name. The addition, *ἐν τοῖς προφήταις*, is palpably an interpolation.—In ch. xxxiii. the whole portion v. 14—26, is wanting in the Aldine, Vatican, and Alexandrine copies. It occurs, however, in three manuscripts, collated for Walton's Polyglott and Grabe's Lxx. in which the latter clause of v. 16. stands thus:

Καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ὄνομα ὃ κληθήσεται, Κύριος δικαιοσύνη ἡμῶν.
 "And this the name which shall be announced, the Lord our righteousness."

Καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ὄνομα ὃ καλέσει αὐτήν, Κύριος δίκαιος σὺν ἡμῖν.
 "And this the name which he shall call her, The righteous Lord with us."

SECT. XXVI.

SON OF MAN, UNITED WITH THE ETERNAL GOD, AND
EXERCISING UNIVERSAL EMPIRE.

Dan. vii. 9, 10, 13, 14.

“I looked, until the thrones were cast down; and [then] the ANCIENT OF DAYS sat [in judgment]. His robe was white as snow, and the hair of his head as pure wool: his throne, flames of fire; and his wheels, glowing fire. A flowing stream of fire issued from his presence. Thousand thousands were his attendants; and ten thousand ten thousands stood in his presence. The session of judgment began, and the books were opened.—I looked in visions of the night, and, behold! with the clouds of heaven came [one] like a SON OF MAN; he approached to the ANCIENT OF DAYS, and was brought near into his presence. And to him was given dominion and glory and empire; and all peoples, nations, and languages shall serve him. His dominion is an eternal dominion which shall not pass away, and his empire that which shall not be destroyed.”*

THE connection of this prediction, the terms in which it is conveyed, the all but unanimous consent of Jewish † and Christian interpreters, and the habitual application by Jesus of its distinguishing epithet to himself, unite to assure us of its direct reference to the Messiah.

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

† See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

It is generally understood as a representation of the Messiah approaching in his official character to the Eternal Father, and entering upon the exercise of his mediatorial empire. It thus contains a testimony to the *human nature* of Christ, and a confirmation of the doctrine so frequently repeated in the Old and New Testaments, of his glorious exaltation and universal reign. Unquestionable, however, as is the assertion of the Messiah's *real* humanity; it is, by no means, an assertion of a *mere* and *exclusive* human nature. So far from that, the magnificent descriptions which it gives, are calculated to excite a strong doubt, whether SUCH POWERS and SUCH AN EXERCISE of them are, by any possibility, compatible with the nature and capacities of any being merely human. It is replied that the dominion of the Messiah's doctrine is the whole that is intended; the universal prevalence and the perpetual duration of his religion. The justness of this assertion will be hereafter examined, when we shall have to review the numerous declarations of scripture concerning the reign of the Messiah, and to ascertain what *personal agency* those declarations may import.

But, of a leading part of the passage before us, I would, with all deference, submit to the reader's candid consideration, another interpretation, founded on two grounds, which it will be proper first to state.

1. The description given of the ETERNAL BEING

in the former part of our citation coincides with another representation occurring in the New Testament, in a manner so definite and striking, that the latter cannot but be regarded as designedly alluding to the former. Each is the scenery of a prophetic vision; each is composed of the same symbols; and the significancy of each plainly points to the same characters of dignity, holiness, wisdom, and all-pervading and irresistible power. It is needless to say of whom the New Testament passage is a description:—"I turned and saw—one like to a son of man; enrobed down to the feet; and girded around the breasts with a girdle of gold. His head and his hairs were white as white wool, as snow; and his eyes as a flame of fire; and his feet [—the supporters of his throne? *] like to fine brass, as if they glowed in a furnace."†

2. Though the word translated "he was *brought near*,"‡ does not necessarily imply more than a near approach; yet it may be justly extended to the expression of a personal union. Its radical idea is that of *very close contact*; and its different forms are applied to many instances of *conjunction*, *indwelling*, and *union*, the most close and intimate that exist among men. §

* Τράπεζαν ἡμῶν φέρε τρεῖς πόδας ἔχουσιν. *Aristoph.* *Pedem et nostrum dicimus et lecti, &c.* *Seneca de Benef. lib. ii. § 34.*

† Rev. i. 12—15.

‡ חקרבוהי Lxx. προσήχθη.

§ For instance, Gen. xxv. 22. Is. viii. 3. Lev. i. 13. Ps. v. 9. xlix. 11.

Upon these grounds it is proposed as a fair and rational interpretation of the whole passage, to view it as declaring, in the symbolical language of prophecy, an assumption of the frail and humble nature of a child of man into an *absolute union* with the Great ETERNAL; and that this union is the basis of the Messiah's office as the Sovereign and Saviour of the world.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. XXVI.

 Note [A] p. 314.

עתיק יומין ANCIENT OF DAYS. The adjective denotes not only *old*, but *permanent, undiminished, unaltered*: see *Schultens in Job. xxi. 7. et in Prov. viii. 18.* and *Eichhorn in Simonis Lex.* Perhaps the epithet would be more adequately rendered by the single expression, THE IMMORTAL.—SON OF MAN, אִנּוֹן, the name appropriated to imply the frailty, sorrows, and mortality of human nature, and thus contradistinguished from אֱלֹהִים and אִישׁ.—הִקְרִיבוּהוּ literally, *they brought him near*: but it is a well known idiom of the Hebrew and its cognate languages to use the third person, either singular or plural, no nominative being expressed or intimated, in an impersonal or indefinite sense. This idiom, indeed, is by no means confined to the Hebraic dialects. See the remarks on Jer. xxiii. 6.

Note [B] p. 314.

The Rabbinical commentators without exception appear to have acknowledged this application. Carpzovius, in his *Dissertation* on this passage (ap. *Menthenii Thesaurum*, tom. i.) has made an ample collection of their testimonies. The following are a specimen. “The interpreters explain the words, *As a son of man*, of the King Messiah, as being the one man who shall come to judgment and to supplicate for his people.” Abrabanel, *Comm. in loc.* This is the Messiah, our Righteousness, who shall draw near into the presence of God.” *Joseph ben Jarchi, ed. Const. l'Empereur.*

SECT. XXVII.

SOVEREIGN, SHEPHERD, RESTORER, HE WHOSE ACTINGS
HAVE BEEN FROM ETERNITY.

Micah v. 1—4.

1. And thou, Bethlehem of Ephratah,
[Too] little to be among the clans of Judah;
[Yet] from thee shall [one] come forth in my presence; to be
Sovereign in Israël,
Even he whose comings forth are from eternity, from the days
of the everlasting period.
5. Surely [God] will renounce them till the time that she who is
pregnant shall bear,
And the remnant of his brethren shall return with the sons of
Israel.
Even he shall stand, and shall be the Shepherd, in the
strength of Jehovah ;
In the exaltation of the name of Jehovah his God :
And they shall dwell in quietness, because now shall he be
great to the ends of the earth,
10. And he shall be the Restorer.*

THIS remarkable passage possesses a common character with many others in the prophecies; that it makes the sufferings and deliverances of the Jews from their Assyrian and other enemies,

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

occasions of rising to animated descriptions of the Messiah, and the spiritual happiness of his reign. This character particularly belongs to the contemporary prophets Isaiah and Micah. Thus the connection and the terms of this passage lead to its application to the Restorer and Saviour of mankind; and ill comport with the efforts of those who represent it as a description of Zerubbabel, or of some other chieftain of Judah on the return from Babylon. The express reference to the Messiah is affirmed in the Chaldee Targum,* and in the commencement of the Gospel of Matthew: and those who do not receive as authentic the portion in which the reference is made, acknowledge its very high antiquity, and will admit it as evidence that the Jewish nation generally regarded this prophecy as the Targumist explains it.

Besides the characters of supreme power employed for the most benevolent purposes, which this passage, in common with many others, attributes to the Messiah; we find a *local* and *temporal*

* “And thou, Bethlehem of Ephrata, little art thou, to be reckoned among the clans of the house of Judah; out of thee shall proceed in my presence the Messiah, to exercise sovereignty over Israel; whose name has been called from eternity, from the days of the everlasting period. *Targ. Jon.*—“Thou art little; but out of thee shall come forth to me the King Messiah, of whom also the words treat, The stone which the builders rejected,” &c. *Jarchi.* The same application is made by *Kimchi* and *Abrabanel.*

origin ascribed to him, and in the same sentence an equally clear assertion of a *prior* and *eternal existence*.*

Some, following the hint in the Targum, explain the latter clause of the foreknowledge, or the purpose, of God that the Messiah should come into existence, under the circumstances predicted. To this opinion it is obvious to reply, that it renders the most solemn and observable part of the whole description superfluous and unmeaning: for every human being, and every atom of existence, is equally with the Messiah an object of the divine decree “from eternity.” No peculiarity of oriental idiom, no use of any language, can so violate the common sense of men, as to attribute ACTIVE PROCEEDINGS† to a being, infinite ages before it came into existence. A man who should use such an expression, when he meant only to say that the

* “Hoc loco significat Michæus Messiam, quod ad humanitatem attinet, nasciturum Bethlehæmæ; quod ad Divinitatem autem, non esse nasciturum, quippe qui sit sempiternus.” “Micah here declares that the Messiah should be born at Bethlehem, with respect to his human nature; but that, with respect to his Divinity, he should not be born, since he is from eternity.” *Castalio in loc.* an author whose predilections would not have led him to this annotation, had he not perceived the amplest reason for it.

† The unquestionable sense of מְצַחֵם in all its varieties of application, whether to the springing of fountains, to vegetation, to the rising of the sun, to the working of intelligent agents, or to any other of the motions of matter or mind.

Deity had foreknown, or foreordained, the existence and actions of the object in question, would expose either his understanding or his integrity to suspicion.

With as little reason can an objection be taken against our translation of the next words in the clause: "FROM ETERNITY, FROM THE DAYS OF THE EVERLASTING PERIOD:" for, though the two principal terms, taken separately, are occasionally used to denote a limited (yet to present and human apprehensions a very long and hidden) period: the proper and usual meaning of each is a REAL ETERNITY, each occurs in passages evidently intended to be the most solemn assertions of Infinite Duration,* and the combination of the two furnishes the strongest expression for that purpose, of which the Hebrew language is capable.†

* קדם see the passages referred to in the note on the text. For עולם see Gen. xxi. 33. 1 Chron. xxix. 10. Ps. xc. 2. xxv. 6. ciii. 17.

† See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. XXVII.

 Note [A] p. 319.

L. 1. אלפי *thousands*: but the term was used to denominate a statistical subdivision in each tribe, as the words *hundred* and *tything* are in the English counties. See Ex. xviii. 21. Judges vi. 15. 1 Sam. xxiii. 23. To this meaning the word *clan* seems the most suitable.—L. 4. קדם *eternity*; Deut. xxxiii. 27. Ps. lv. 19. Habak. i. 12. עולם “*an age, eternity, the longest duration*”;—in particular, *time past, ancient times*;—PERPETUITY, so far as the nature of the subject can admit the idea of perpetual duration.—Not from על but from a root preserved in the Æthiopic language, signifying *the passage of time, continuance, duration*.” *Simonis and Eichhorn in Lex. Hebr.*—L. 3. לי *in my presence, coram me*: so ל is used in Jer. xxvi. 6.—L. 5. Following Grotius and Dathé, I conceive that this clause refers not so probably to Mary the mother of Jesus, as to the church, considered as now in the pangs of suffering, but to be delivered and honoured by the coming of the Messiah and by the accession of the gentiles, and finally of the Israelites. The same figurative representation occurs just before, ch. iv. 9, 10. and in many other instances in the prophetic scriptures.—L. 10. שלום *peace, prosperity, safety, restoration*; the abstract put for the concrete, as frequently. Here the paragraph ends, the next words beginning a new one. So the Targum, the Syriac Version, and the best modern translators and interpreters.

Note [B] p. 322.

“This prophecy of Micah is perhaps the most important single prophecy in the Old Testament, and the most comprehensive, respecting the personal character of the Messiah and his successive manifestation to the world. It crowns the whole chain of prophecies descriptive of the several limitations of the Blessed Seed of the woman, to the line of Shem, to the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the tribe of Judah, and to the royal house of David, here terminating in his birth at Bethlehem, “the city of David.” It carefully distinguishes his human nativity from his eternal generation; foretels the rejection of the Israelites and Jews for a season, their final restoration, and the universal peace destined to prevail throughout the earth in “the regeneration.” It forms, therefore, the basis of the New Testament; which begins with his human birth at Bethlehem, the miraculous circumstances of which are recorded in the introductions of Matthew’s and Luke’s Gospels; his eternal generation, as the ORACLE, or WISDOM, in the sublime introduction of John’s Gospel; his prophetic character and second coming, illustrated in the four Gospels and the Epistles; ending with a prediction of the speedy approach of the latter, in the Apocalypse: Rev. xxii. 20.” *Dr. Hales’s Analysis of Chronol.* vol. ii. p. 463.

SECT. XXVIII.

THE DESIRE OF NATIONS, AND THE GLORY OF THE LATTER
TEMPLE.

Haggai ii. 6—9.

1. For thus saith Jehovah of hosts,
It is yet a very little time
And I will shake the heavens and the earth,
And the sea and the dry land ;
5. And I will shake all nations ;
And the DESIRE of all nations shall come,
And I will fill this house with glory ;
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
Mine is the silver and mine is the gold,
10. Saith Jehovah of hosts.
Great shall be the glory of this house,
The latter above the former ;
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
And in this place I will give peace ;
15. Saith Jehovah of hosts.*

THE Messiah is, in this prediction, described as a Deliverer of whom the world would stand in the greatest need, and who should be very ex-

* L. 6. “ Any difficulty from the verb באו *shall come*, being plural, and the nominative חמדת *desire*, being singular, ceases on its being considered that the verb to a substantive *in regimine*

tensively the object of actual desire and expectation. The preparations, in the providential government of God, for his reign, were to be such as would indicate it to be of the greatest importance; and its spiritual glory, in effecting the true happiness of mankind, was to be infinitely superior to all earthly splendor. But the passage does not appear to afford, either directly or inferentially, any definite information on the specific object of our inquiry, the nature and person of that great Deliverer.

with another, often agrees with the number of the latter instead of the former. E. g. 2 Sam. x. 9. Job xv. 20. Is. xxv. 3." *Dathé Notæ Criticæ in Haggæum*, The LXX. perhaps read, $\tau\omicron\mu\omicron\tau\iota$ as they translate it $\tau\acute{\alpha}$ ἐκλεκτά.

SECT. XXIX.

PIERCED BY THE PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM.

Zech. xii. 8—10.

1. In that day, Jehovah will be the protector,
Around the inhabitants of Jerusalem :
And the infirm among them shall be in that day as David,
And the house of David as God,
5. As the angel of Jehovah before their face.
And it shall be, in that day,
That I will pursue to destruction all the nations that shall
assault Jerusalem.
And I will pour out upon the house of David
And upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
10. A spirit of grace and supplications :
And they shall look unto me whom they have pierced ;
And they shall mourn on account of it,
As a mourner for an only son ;
And bitterness shall be on account of it,
15. As one in bitterness for a first-born.*

THE Jews, converted to the faith of Jesus as the real and only Messiah, are here depicted as de-

* L. 11. Many copies in the collations of Kennicott and de Rossi read *אליו unto him* ; but, as the majority of manuscripts and those of the highest antiquity, and all the Ancient Versions, consent in the common reading, critical integrity requires it to be

votionally looking to him with hope and trust, and as bitterly deploring their former disbelief and opposition to him. But Jehovah declares HIMSELF to be the person thus treated. That God can be corporally “pierced,” no thinking person will assert. The real sufferer was “the man Christ Jesus.” If, then, we are willing to do justice to the whole testimony of scripture, must it not follow that there is such *unity* between the suffering man and the eternal God as, without confusing the properties of each nature, renders it proper for the Divine Being to use this personal

preferred. In John xix. 37. it is cited, ὁψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν· but this does not determine certainly whether ἐμὲ or αὐτὸν be the ellipsis. That in the two next clauses לִי occurs, is not a proof against the received reading: for if it be rendered *on account of him*, it is referrible to the enallage of persons which Kimchi and Abrabenel lay down as a rule of the language, and of which instances occur in Ps. lxxxi. 16. Is. xxxiii. 2. xlii. 24. Ezech. xxxi. 10. See *Glassii Philol. Sacr.* Lib. iv. Tract. ii. Obs. 16. *Frischmuthi Diss. de Messia Confixo*, cap. 3. § 9. Grotius also (*Annot. in loc.*) observes that this idiom is frequent in Zechariah. But both Jewish and Christian critics have observed that the term is, in this place, more applicable to the *fact* than to the *person*. The suffix י is significant of a *thing* or *event*, as well as of a living object; as in Job xxxvi. 33. (also xiv. 22. according to Schultens), Amos i. 3. “The phrase הִבִּטּוּ אֵלַי constantly denotes affection and confidence, or the hope of obtaining benefits from the person regarded.—The lamentation is not properly *for him* whom they behold alive and crowned with glory and honour,—but *for the fact*, the awful sin of having crucified the Lord of glory.” *Alb. Schultens, Anim. Philol. et Crit. in V. T.* p. 547. Dathé strenuously supports this interpretation in his *Notæ Crit.* His version is, “Intuebuntur me, quem transfixerunt, atque eâ de re lugebunt.”

style;—"they shall look unto ME whom they have pierced?"—The language of inspiration must be just and true: and therefore the Messiah must be a Divine, as well as a human being.

SECT. XXX.

Zech. xiii. 7.

Sword ! Awake against my shepherd,
 And against the man near to me ;
 Saith Jehovah of hosts.
 Smite the shepherd, and the flock shall be scattered,
 And I will exercise my care over the little ones.

MANY interpreters have considered the adjunct here rendered “near to me,”* as implying equality of rank and identity of nature. I cannot, however, from either the etymology or the usage of the term, satisfy myself to give it a higher meaning than is here expressed. The passage describes the Messiah as the faithful servant of God, intimate and beloved ; and yet as smitten by the terrible stroke of divine vengeance. Upon what principle of rectitude the spotless Saviour, so perfectly the beloved of God, could be thus devoted to extreme suffering ; belongs to another and most important department of Christian doctrine.

* עֲמִית In all the other places in which it occurs it denotes a neighbour or fellow-citizen. Lev. xix. 11, 15, 17. xxiv. 19. xxv. 14, 15, 17.

SECT. XXXI.

SOVEREIGN; ANGEL OF THE COVENANT.

Mal. iii. 1.

1. Behold, I send my messenger,
And he shall make ready the way before me.
And unexpectedly shall come to his temple
The Sovereign whom ye are seeking;
5. Even the angel of the covenant,
In whom ye are delighted.
Behold, he cometh; saith Jehovah of hosts.*

THE Messiah is here denominated LORD or SOVEREIGN by a term in a peculiar form, appropriated to signify the Supreme God as the Ruler of his visible church, and the Possessor of univer-

* L. 2. פנה in *pihel*, literally *to sweep*, but *make ready* is preferred as being less low.—L. 4. ה'הוה *Sovereign*. This word is often applied to magistrates, fathers, and other human rulers; but, in every instance in which it occurs, as here, with the emphatic prefix ה', it is used only as a name of Deity. So says the learned and minutely indefatigable John Henry Michaelis, the uncle of the late professor at Gottingen; *Notæ in Proph.* and the same is intimated by Cocceius and Stockius in their Lexicons, and by Eichhorn in his edition of Simonis.—L. 5. It may seem arbitrary to render מלאך *angel* which in L. 1. was rendered *messenger*. But, as it is certain that in the one instance it refers to the forerunner of the Messiah (Matt. xi. 10.) and next, at least, to

sal dominion. The definite use of this term appears in the demand of obedience to the Most High, as “the SOVEREIGN, Jehovah the God of Israel;*” and in the denunciation of his judgments upon the obstinately wicked, as the inflictions of “the SOVEREIGN, Jehovah of hosts.†” Yet this term, thus defined and appropriated by the usage of the Hebrew scriptures, is, in the place before us, expressly attributed to the Messiah.

The other term, “Angel of the covenant,” falls under the same head of consideration with a number of passages, to which the next Section will be devoted.

certain, that in the other it designates the Messiah himself, the use of the two terms favours perspicuity, and, it is hoped, does not violate fidelity.—“*Angel of the covenant*—: that great Messenger, who shall be sent on no common occasion, but to establish a new covenant, better than the old, with both Jews and gentiles. That these words are to be understood of the Messiah, Kimchi has admitted.” *Grotius in loc.* “The two persons here announced cannot be any other than John the Baptist, for the former, and Jesus the Messiah for the latter.” *Dr. Priestley's Note.*

* Ex. xxxiv. 23. תַּאדֹּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

† Is. i. 24. יְהוָה תַּאדֹּן יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת also ch. iii. 1. x. 16, 33. xix. 4.

SECT. XXXII.

ON THE PERSON DENOMINATED, IN THE OLD TESTAMENT,
THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH.

IN several parts of the Old Testament Scriptures, a person is introduced under the name *Angel of JEHOVAH*,* in circumstances, and with attributes and ascriptions, so remarkable as to require a peculiar consideration. We shall recite the principal of these passages.

To Hagar “the Angel of Jehovah said, I will exceedingly multiply thy seed.”—Three times besides the same person speaks under the same name; and at last it is added that Hagar “called upon the name of JEHOVAH who had spoken to her, Thou art GOD who seest me!”†

* מלאך יהוה Some conceive that the latter noun is in apposition rather than in construction, and that the term should, therefore, be translated *Angel Jehovah*. This remark cannot be absolutely disproved; neither can it be established by such evidence as approaches to certainty. There are so many instances of other nouns put in the same way before יהוה, and unquestionably to be construed *in regimine* with it, that the current of analogies is against this opinion. So also is the evidence of the Ancient Versions.

† Gen. xvi. 7—13.

“ The Angel of Jehovah from heaven called to him :—Now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only one, from ME.—The Angel of Jehovah called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, By MYSELF I have sworn, saith JEHOVAH, that since thou hast done this thing,—in blessing I will bless thee.” *

“ The Angel of God said to me,—I am the GOD of Bethel.—” †

“ He blessed Joseph, and said, “ The God in whose presence my fathers Abraham and Isaac have walked, the God who hath nourished me from my first being to this day, the Angel who hath redeemed me from all evil, bless the youths!” ‡

To Moses “ the Angel of Jehovah appeared in a flame of fire, from the midst of the bush.—And Jehovah saw that he turned aside to look, and God called to him from the midst of the bush ;—I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob :—I AM THAT I AM.—” §

To the same Being is attributed, in the New Testament, the giving of the law to the Israelites; and certainly that was the act of God himself. “ This [Moses] is the person who was in the

* Gen. xxii. 11—18.

† Ch. xxxi. 11—13.

‡ Gen. xlviii. 15, 16.

§ Exod. iii. 2—15.

assembly of the people in the wilderness, with the Angel who spoke to him on mount Sinai.—” *

“ Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee to the place which I have prepared. Revere his presence, and listen to his voice. Provoke him not; for he will not bear your rebellions; for MY NAME is within him.—” †

“ The Angel of Jehovah encampeth around them that fear him, and delivereth them. ‡

—“ He was their Saviour: in all their distresses, he was no oppressor; and the Angel of his presence saved them. By his love and by his kindness he redeemed them: and he bare them and sustained them all the days of old.”—§

“ He shewed me Joshua the high priest, standing in the presence of the Angel of Jehovah; and the adversary standing at his right hand to oppose him. And Jehovah said to the adversary, Jehovah rebuke thee, O adversary! Jehovah rebuke thee,

* Acts vii. 38. compared with Exod. xix. 19, 20. xx, 1.

† See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

‡ Psalm xxxiv. 7.

§ Isa. lxiii. 8, 9. The reading of the common Hebrew text אֱלֹהִים seems more consonant with the sense of the passage than the marginal Keri יְהוָה which the established translation has followed: and אֱלֹהִים does not signify an *afflicted person*, but an *enemy* or *oppressor*.

he who hath chosen Jerusalem! Is not this a brand snatched out of the fire? And Joshua was clothed in filthy garments, and he stood in the presence of the Angel of Jehovah: and he [the Angel] continued to speak, and said to the attendants on his presence, Take away those filthy garments from off him. Also he said to him, See! I have made thine iniquity to pass away from thee, and I have caused thee to be clothed with festive robes."—*

"The house of David shall be as God, as the Angel of Jehovah before their face."†

"The Sovereign whom ye are seeking shall unexpectedly come to his temple, even the Angel of the covenant in whom ye are delighted."‡§

On bringing together the principal features in these remarkable descriptions, we find them to be plainly the following.

The person described claims an uncontrolled sovereignty over the affairs of men:

He has the attribute of omniscience and omnipresence:

He uses the awful formula by which the Deity, on various occasions, condescended to confirm the

* Zech. iii. 1—4. † Ch. xii. 9. ‡ Mal. iii. 1.

§ See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

faith of those to whom the primitive revelations were given; he “swear^{eth} BY HIMSELF.”

He is the gracious Protector, the Redeemer from evil, and the Author of the most desirable blessings:

His favour is to be sought with the deepest solicitude, as an enjoyment of the highest importance to the interests of men:

He is the object of religious invocation:

He is, in the most express manner, and repeatedly, declared to be JEHOVAH, GOD, the ineffable I AM THAT I AM:

Yet this mysterious Being is represented as *distinct* from God, and acting (as the term *Angel* imports) under a divine Mission.

Are there, then, two Jehovahs?—Revelation and enlightened reason reject the notion. Three other modes of solution have been proposed.

1. That the Angel of the divine presence was some eminent, celestial, creature; sent to convey the messages of the divine will to those who were the immediate subjects of revelation; acting, therefore, on the behalf of the Deity; and allowed to *personate* the Deity, in the assumption of the attributes and forms of address which are distinc-

tive of him.* To this opinion the following objections apply.

First: there is no intimation, in any of the passages which introduce this Angel speaking and acting, that he is personating the character or reciting the words of another. Unless such an intimation were expressly given, or in some way indirectly notified, it is contrary to all just principles of interpretation to assume it.

Secondly: in the numerous instances throughout the scriptures in which the prophets or other persons deliver addresses in the name of God, there is always a manifest, and as it were solicitously marked, distinction between the messenger and the Author of the message. The proof of this circumstance will be striking to every unprejudiced person who will read a few pages of the prophets. The formula, "thus saith Jehovah," is usually made most prominent at the opening of each oracle; and, in the course of it, is repeated so frequently as to seem redundant to such as are not aware of the extreme and anxious jealousy with which the sacred writings guard the exclusive prerogatives of the Most High. The principle expressed in the declaration of the Eternal,—"I will not give my glory to another," is ever and most sacredly observed.

* The opinion of Episcopius, le Clerc, Dr. Samuel Clarke, Henry Taylor in his *Letters of Ben Mordecai*, &c.

Thirdly : two instances occur in the closing book of scripture, in which an apostle, under erroneous views with regard to the person of his celestial guide, attempted to pay him divine honours. “I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who shewed me these things : and he said to me, See that thou do not so ! I am thy fellow-servant : —worship God.”*—Is it to be supposed, that the heavenly messenger would thus eagerly protest against the least seeming of an intrusion into the place of the Supreme ; while, under the former dispensations of religion, a line of conduct exactly the reverse was pursued, on similar occasions ? It should also be taken into the account, that, comparing the degree of religious information existing and diffused among men in the patriarchal ages, and at the time the Apocalypse was written, the danger of idolatry during the former period was incomparably greater than at the latter : consequently the obligation to provide against that danger was in proportion.

2. That the expression is nothing but a Hebraism to denote God himself, or some miraculous token of the divine presence. This is Dr. Priestley’s and Mr. Belsham’s opinion. “The phrase ‘angel of Jehovah,’ means either the visible symbol of the divine presence, or Jehovah himself.”† But this

* Rev. xxii. 8, 9. xix. 10.. It can make no difference to the argument, whether the transactions took place in prophetic vision, or in outward action.

† *Calm Inquiry*, p. 308.

decision leaves unaccounted for, the very strong attributions of intelligence, will, power, and all personal properties; which it would be perfectly absurd to apply to a visible splendour, or any symbolical phænomenon whatever; and it overlooks the *essential* part of the case, the clear and marked **DISTINCTION** which is preserved between this personal Angel, and Him who sent him. It is this distinction, so widely different from the idea of a symbolical token, which makes the difficulty, upon the Unitarian hypothesis.

3. That the Being eminently called the Angel of Jehovah is one who is, in certain respects or properties, *distinct* from God; and yet is, at the same time, truly and essentially **THE SAME** with God.—Certainly we are not entitled to affirm, antecedently to all investigation, that such a mode of existence, distinct in some minor respects, is inconsistent with a proper unity and identity in such other manner or respects as is essential to the Deity. It is grossly unphilosophical to apply to a subject confessedly **INFINITE**, the reasonings and analogies which have been drawn merely from the observation, and that a very confined and imperfect observation, of finite nature.* Of God, our best and only certain knowledge is that which Himself has been pleased to communicate: and if, in the records of his communications of truth to mankind, such a combination of distinction with unity should be affirmed,—every reasonable

* See Note [C] at the end of this Section.

and upright mind will admit that the fact ought to be regarded as satisfactorily established, however, beyond the reach of our knowledge, and perhaps of our faculties, the mode of that fact might be.*

It is, also, to be recollected that we have found this title of Angel in the foregoing analysis of the prophetic descriptions of the Messiah. In a following chapter we shall proceed to bring together the several parts of those descriptions; and, if a similar combination of characters shall be found in each, these two courses of inquiry will afford light to the other.†

* See Note [D] at the end of this Section.

† See Note [E] at the end of this Section.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. XXXII.

 Note [A] p. 335.

Exod. xxiii. 20, 21. The judicious and candid Dathé translates שמִי בקִרְבוֹ by *Idem est qui ego* : and adds, “From this remarkable passage it appears to me very clear that the Messenger or Angel of God, whom he here promises to be the Leader of his people, is not a creature, much less Moses or Joshua, but an uncreated Angel. For (1.) the clause, *He will not pardon your sins*, is not applicable to any created being, whether angel or man : (2.) the next words, *My name is in him*, cannot be explained to signify, He shall act in my name, that is, under my command, or by authority received from me ; for in that case another word, *he will act*, or *he will speak*, or the like, would have been added : (3.) the same conclusion is established by a comparison of this passage with chap. xxxii. 34. [and xxxii. 2.] where God expresses his indignation against the Israelites for their idolatry by declaring that not Himself, but an angel, should be henceforth their guide : but this, the people and Moses most earnestly deprecate” [as a calamity and a judgment, whereas the present instance is a promise of favour and mercy, and is so acknowledged in Is. lxiii. 8.] “That angel, therefore, is perfectly different from him who is spoken of in the passage before us ; who is the same that appeared to Moses, chap. iii. 2. and there like-

wise both speaks and acts as God himself." *Dathii Pentateuchus*, p. 308.

On this passage the *Calm Inquiry* observes, "Here it is said that the name of Jehovah is expressly given to the conducting angel. But this remark is very erroneous. An angel is properly nothing more than a messenger, and the angel here alluded to was probably Joshua, who acted in the name, that is, by the authority, of God." P. 307. The argument of this observation is sufficiently answered by Dathé's criticisms; to which may be added, that the command "Be on thy guard from [*i. e.* revere, obsequiously attend,] his presence, does not well comport with the rank of a human being. It is worthy of observation that the clause of which Dathé justly remarks that it is not applicable to any created being, is repeated identically in the words of Joshua, "Ye cannot serve Jehovah, for He is the Holy God [the noun and adjective both plural, קדושים אלהים], the avenging God [אל קנוי]; he will not bear your rebellions and your sins." Josh. xxiv. 19. A strong proof that Joshua could not be the person alluded to, as Mr. B. supposes.

Note [B] p. 336.

There is another and a very striking passage in the Book of Job (ch. xxxiii. 23.), but which is not introduced in this enumeration, on account of the difficulty of determining whether the personage thus described were the Great Angel mentioned in so many other passages; or a mortal teacher of eminent piety and wisdom, such as Elihu himself, whose doctrines and admonitions would be the means of reclaiming and consoling the erring complainer; or a created celestial spirit, by whose ministry, as in many instances in the scripture history, God might announce his own pardoning mercy, and the sinner's duty of repentance and prayer. I do not perceive any just reason against the first of these senses, and it seems to accord best with the terms and the whole of the description. The principal clause may be literally rendered thus: "If there be with him an Interceding Angel, one out of a thousand, to announce unto man his [God's] righteousness." אחר מני אלף not having the definitive ה before the last word, is strictly one out of a thousand, not *the* thou-

sand; and is an expression for that which is extremely rare and valuable, as in Eccl. vii. 28. Mr. Good seems to have overlooked this, in preferring the definitive form. The following extract from his Version and Notes will gratify the reader. It will be seen that he adopts the last of the three interpretations.

23, Surely will there be over him an ANGEL,
An INTERCESSOR, one of THE THOUSAND,
To point out to the man his duty.

24, Then will he be gracious unto him, and say,
“ Release him from going down into the pit;
“ I have received an atonement.”

“ Not ‘ one of *a* thousand,’ as rendered by all the translators. It is evidently a character of definite dignity, and closes the sublime and beautiful climax, which runs through the verse.

— ‘ There shall be over him an *angel*’—but angels are ministers of judgment as well as of mercy; ‘ There shall be over him an *angel of grace*; an intercessory angel, whose office is directly the reverse of the *Destinies* or ministers of Death.”

The profound and accurate orientalist Schultens, after examining with his accustomed minuteness the different interpretations and hypotheses, gives his judgment that the Angel of the covenant, the Messiah, is the person described; and he alleges the correspondence of the titles, the suitableness of the descriptions, the affinity with chap. xix. 25, and the scope and argument of the passage, as determining reasons for his opinion. *Vers. et Comm. in Job.* vol. ii. p. 918.—A modern German critic, John Caspar Velthusen, maintains the same interpretation, and thinks that this passage is one of those PRIMITIVE ORACLES which divine mercy had vouchsafed to the early generations of mankind, and of which he conceives that many instances occur in the Book of Job, introduced as sacred authorities. This opinion, on the relics of primitive revelations, and proverbial sayings, has been maintained by Michaelis and others. *Velthus. Exerc. Crit. in Libr. Job.* p. 102—118.

Note [C] p. 340.

“ As a blind man has no idea of colours, so we have no idea of the modes by which the All-wise God exercises his uni-

versal perception and intelligence:" [How much less, then, of the mode of his existence, the intimate and essential constitution, to use an improper term, of his perfect and illimitable nature?] — "We have ideas of his attributes; but we are absolutely ignorant what is the intimate essence of any thing:—by no exercise of either sensation or reflection, can we know intimate essences; much less can we have any idea of the intimate essence of God." *Sir Isaac Newton's Scholium Generale*, at the end of his *Principia*.

Note [D] p. 341.

"This *Angel* denotes some mystery.—He is the angel of whom it is written, *The Angel who hath redeemed me*, (Gen. xlviii. 16.) And behold, so taught the Rabbis. It is decreed that, in the future period [ומנא דמתי the age of the Messiah], he shall become supreme and precious; so that by him the holy name shall be exalted, and the Holy and Blessed will, by him redeem the idolatrous nations." The book *Zohar on Deut. ap Schattgen. Hor. Hebr. et Talm.* tom ii. 125. "That Angel is the Redeemer, who is found in every redemption that is in the world:—the Shechina who always walks with man, and never departs from him." *id. ap. eund.* p. 145. "— The Redeemer of the world, the Guardian of men. He it is who hath prepared blessings for the whole world." *id. ap. eund.* p. 149. "This Son is the faithful Shepherd. Of thee it is said, *Kiss the Son*; Thou art *my Son*. He is the Prince of the Israelites, the Lord over things below, the Lord of ministering angels, the Son of the Supreme, the Son of the Holy and Blessed God, and the gracious Shechina." *id. ap. eund.* p. 6.

Note [E] p. 341.

The learned Polish Socinian Enjedin proposes, as a general answer to any reasoning from the supposed agency of Christ under the Old Testament, these arguments: (1.) From Heb. i. 1. it appears that the divine will was revealed of old by prophets, in contradistinction from the instrumentality of the Son, which dispeculiar to this new dispensation: (2.) From v. 5. *To which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, &c.* it appears

that no angel is the Messiah. *Expl. Loc.* p. 23. The reply to these objections is obvious. (1.) The writer of the Ep. to the Hebrews manifestly does not intend an exclusive assertion on either side: for, under the O. T. the messages of authority from God were frequently communicated in other ways than by prophets, and under the N. T. *prophets* are mentioned among the apostles, and other inspired servants of Christ: but the design of the verse evidently is to shew to the Jews, who were immediately addressed, that the Christian dispensation proceeded from the same authority as the Mosaic. (2.) The fallacy of the other argument lies in a change, perhaps inadvertent, of the acceptation of the term *angel*. In the apostle's reasoning, and in the major of Enjedin's argument, it is used as the name of a superior order of beings; but, in its application to the Messiah, it has its generic signification of *messenger*. All acknowledge that, in this sense as descriptive of office, the term is applicable to the Messiah.

SECT. XXXIII.

ON THE REMARKABLE USE OF PLURAL NOUNS AND ATTRIBUTIVES IN APPLICATION TO THE DIVINE BEING.

THE attention of scripture critics in both ancient and modern times has been drawn to a remarkable peculiarity in the Hebrew language and its dialect the Chaldee; a peculiarity which, so far as I have been able to learn, has not its parallel in any other known language. A little explanation will make it intelligible to those who have never paid attention to these studies.

The most usual appellation of the Deity in the original Scriptures of the Old Testament is אֱלֹהִים *Elohim* (or, as commonly read by those who reject the points, *Aleim*), which is constantly translated GOD: but it is the regular plural of אֱלֹה or אֱלֹה* *Eloah*, which also occurs, though much less frequently than in the plural form, and is always translated in the same manner.†

This plural appellative is generally put in agreement with singular verbs, pronouns, and adjectives.

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

† See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

tives : as in the first sentence of the Pentateuch, *Elohim created* ;—*creavit Dii* ;—*les Dieux créa*. This is the ordinary construction through the whole Hebrew Bible.

But sometimes the apposition is made with verbs, pronouns, and adjectives in the *plural* number likewise ; and sometimes singulars and plurals are put together in the same agreement. The following are all the instances of these kinds, so far as I can ascertain.

Gen. xx. 13. חתעו אחי אלהים God [Elohim] “caused me to wander ;—*vagari me fecerunt Dii* ;—*les Dieux m’ont fait égarer*.”

Gen. xxxv. 7. שם נגלו אליו האלהים there “the *Elohim were revealed* to him.” Onkelos understands this of angelic beings.

Deut v. 26. אשר שמע קול אלהים חיים “that hath heard the voice of the Living God [Elohim haiim] ;—*qui audivit vocem Deorum Viventium* ;—*qui a entendu la voix des Dieux Vivans*.” Onkelos renders it, “the voice of the Memra of Jah our God.”

Josh. xxiv. 19. לעבד את יהוה כי אלהים קדשים הוא “to serve Jehovah, for he is the Holy God [Elohim kedoshim] ;—*servire Jehovæ, quia Dii Sancti ipse* ;—*servir à l’Eternel, parceque il est les Dieux Saints*.”

1 Sam. xvii. 26. מערכות אלהים חיים the ranks “ of the Living God [Elohim haiim];—acies instructæ *Deorum Viventium*;—les rangs des *Dieux Vivans*.*

2 Sam. vii. 23. אשר חלכו אלהים לפדות לו “ whom God hath gone [holku Elohim] to redeem unto himself;—quem *Dii progressi sunt* ad redimendum sibi;—lequel *les Dieux s’en sont allés* racheter à soi. The Targum of Jonathan paraphrases this passage by understanding the plural words of divine messengers : “ —whom the [messengers] sent from the presence of Jah went to redeem for a people, and to place to himself a name.”—

Ps. lviii. 12. אך יש-אלהים שפשים באדץ “ Surely there is a God, a Judge, [*Elohim shofetim*] in the earth;—utique esse *Deos Judices* in terrâ;—assurément il y a des *Dieux, des Juges*, dans la terre.”

To these may be added, as presenting the same form of expression, though without the very word Elohim,—

Ps. cxlix. 2. ישמח ישראל בעשיו “ Israel shall rejoice in his Maker [pl.];—lætabitur Israël in *Creatoribus suis*; —Israël se rejouira de ses *Créateurs*.”

Prov. ix. 10. “ The beginning of wisdom is the fear of Jehovah, and the knowledge of the Holy [קדשים *kedoshim*;—*Sanctorum*;—des *Saints*;] is understanding.” According to the usual construction of Hebrew poetry, the plural epithet

* See Note [C] at the end of this Section.

The Holy must be understood in apposition with *Jehovah* in the former half of the distich. The same phrase recurs ch. xxx. 3.

Is. liv. 5. כִּי בַעֲלִיךָ עֹשֶׂיךָ For thy “Creator is thy Husband [both pl.]; nam *Mariti* tui *Creatores* tui; —car tes *Créateurs* sont tes *Maris*.”

Jer. x. 10. יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֱמֶת הוּא אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים “*Jehovah* is the God of truth, he is the Living God [*Elohim haiim*]; *ipse Dii Viventes*;—*lui, il est les Dieux Vivans*.” The same expression occurs in ch. xxiii. 36.

Dan. vii. 18, 22, 25, 27. In each of these verses is the expression, “the saints of the Most High,” the adjective being plural, עֲלִיּוֹנִין [*Elionin*] *Altissimorum*; *des Très Hauts*. The Septuagint and Vulgate versions, and the most eminent biblical critics, refer it to the Deity.

Hos. xii. 1. “But Judah still reigneth with God, and with the Holy [pl. *cum Sanctis*;—*avec les Saints*;—] is faithful.” The parallelism of the Hebrew poetical style, as above remarked, most properly requires *The Holy* to correspond with *God*.

Elohim is generally supposed to be the only one of the divine names which appears in the plural number: but Drusius, Buxtorf, Heeser, Eichhorn, and other distinguished scholars have maintained that *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי Sovereign) and *Shaddai* (שַׁדַּי the

All-sufficient) are plurals of an obsolete and unusual form. The former of these words is of the same family with *Adon* (אֲדֹנָי Lord, master, sovereign), which, both in its singular and in its plural form, is applied to the Divine Being, as well as to human possessors of authority.*

From this use of *Adonim*, or in its construct form *Adoni* the plural of *Adon*, and from another case which will shortly be noticed, the Rabbinical grammarians have deduced a rule, that substantives signifying *dominion*, *dignity*, or *honour*, are put in the plural form though denoting only a singular object, and are joined in agreement with verbs or with adjectives in the singular.

The other cases upon which this rule is grounded are the following.

1. The use of *Baali*, the construct plural of *Baal* (בַּעַל, the possessor of any thing, and, in its secondary senses, a husband, a master, or an owner of any description of property), occurring in a singular sense. The instances from which this opinion is inferred are extremely few,† and they all refer

* Instances of this plural in a singular sense, Is. xix. 4. Mal. i. 6. Gen. xxiv. 9, 51. xlii. 30, &c. &c.

† All that I can discover are in Ex. xxi. 29, 34, 36. xxii. 10—13. and Is. i. 3. All of which denominate the owner of an ox or ass, or of a covered well. A very few other passages occur, as in Prov. xvii. 22. but they are at least questionable, since both the sense and the construction are strictly preserved by taking them in the plural.

to such kinds of ownership as are a burlesque on all ideas of dignity and majesty.

2. A very small number of instances of other words.

Tannim. תַּנִּינִים the great dragon [i. e. crocodile.] Ezech. xxix. 3. Yet this may have been by a literal error of some transcriber put for the singular תַּנִּין *Tannin*. The regular plural is *Tanninim*. In two or three places *Tannim* occurs as the plural by abbreviation.

Behemoth, בְּהֵמוֹת. Job xl. 15. This is generally taken to be the plural of *Behemah*, so put to designate the size of the animal. But the learned Bochart and Eichhorn have satisfactorily shewn that it is an Egyptian word (*P* or *B* the prefix, *ehe* an ox, and *mout* aquatic, thus clearly determining the animal to be the hippopotamus;) with a common singular termination. *Bocharti Hierozoicon*, p. 756. *Eichhorn in Sim. Lex.* p. 213.

תַּאֲנוּשָׁה מְכוּחָה incurable [sing.] her wounds; *insanabilis plagæ ejus*. Mic. i. 9. But this is at best a very doubtful instance: for, (1.) “*Maccoth* may be a singular form, like *Achoth* a sister, *Chocmoth* wisdom, and other words.” (*Simonis et Eichhorn, in Lex Hebr.* p. 1021.)—(2.) The attributive may be put in the singular, to denote a *distributive* application; “each of her wounds is incurable.” So in Prov. xiv. 1. “Wise

women, she buildeth her house," i. e. *every wise woman*: and, conversely, in 1 Kings xx. 20. "the Assyrian, they fled," i. e. each man shifted for himself, and fled individually as he could: (3.) The participle may be taken to agree with the personified subject, Samaria; as it is translated in the margin of our common version, "she is grievously sick of her wounds."

From the whole, I must acknowledge a suspicion, that this alleged rule of Hebrew Syntax does not rest upon a sufficiently solid foundation; a suspicion excited by these considerations.

1. The paucity and dubious character of the examples by which it is conceived to be sustained, and their feeble claim to the notion of *dominion* or *dignity*. The case of *Adonim* and *Elohim* must be left out of the question, for they constitute the phænomenon to be accounted for, and the truth of the allegation cannot be assumed with regard to them, without a manifest *petitio principii*.

2. If the rule were valid, we might reasonably expect to see it exemplified in all, or at least in the most usual, names and titles of honour which occur in the language; such as those which denote Kings, Princes, Nobles, Generals, Priests, and Prophets.* Let the learned reader examine every word of this kind in the Hebrew Bible;

* See in *Buxtorf's*, or *Taylor's Concordance*, or in *Stockius, Simonis, &c.* מלך, שר, פחה, נדיב, נגיד, קצין, כהן, נביא.

and I am greatly mistaken if he will discover one instance of this pretended notation of dignity. Yet can it be imagined that such an "indication of majesty, exalted dignity, and most excellent honour,"* should be conferred upon the owner of an ass, and denied to the sovereign of a kingdom!

3. The full plural *Baalim* (בַּעֲלִים) never occurs but in a proper plural application.

4. Of the existing instances of *Baali* with a singular reference, every one has the pronominal suffix ך.

I, therefore, venture to propose this solution of the difficulty: that, by one of the irregularities incidental to language, the noun *Baal* was brought within the range of the analogy of the nouns אב *father*, אח *brother*, and חתן *father-in-law*. Since, like them, it expresses one of the familiar relations of life, the usage in their case, though originating in a different etymological reason,† might become transferred to it by colloquial assimilation. When any of those names of relationship is used with a pronominal suffix, it takes the ך as, אבִי *thy father*, אחִי *his brother*, חתִּי *her father-in-law*, אבֵינוּ *our father*, &c. Now בַּעֲלִי is the only form in which this supposed plural of *Baal* is found.

We must now take up the case of *Adonim*,

* Buxtorf. *Thesaur. Gramm. Ling. Sanct.* p. 311, 385, 400.

† Viz. that their primitive forms were אבִי אִחִי and חִמִּי. See *Schultensii Inst. ad Fund. Ling. Hebr.* p. 235. or *Schræderi Inst. Hebr. Ulmæ*, 1792, p. 142.

Adoni, and *Adonai* (if it be a plural;) and of *Elohim* and *Elohi*. The problem is to account for their application to inferior beings with a singular reference. This, I think, is solved by regarding it as a case of the well-known fact in the formation of all languages, that particular terms are made general, or that derivative meanings are gradually deduced from the primary and proper one, by dropping the more specific parts of the original idea, and retaining those which are more general. Thus we may suppose these words to have been, in their primary acceptation, attached to the Supreme Being; and that, the plural form having grown into established use, it came to be transferred to those secondary applications which in time arose, regarding *only* the ideas of sovereignty and supremacy, and dropping that of plurality. Hence *Adonim* became an appellative for an earthly lord, and *Elohim* for a false deity, or any other application of it to which the principles which modify language might lead: though, with respect to *Elohim*, we shall find that the instances of its application to a singular object are extremely few indeed. It is surely more reasonable to derive the few and inconsiderable instances of an anomaly from *the capital example* which stands out in every page of the Old Testament, than to consider it as subordinate to them.

But the fact which principally requires our attention, is the constant use of *Elohim* to designate the One and Only God: and this in the language

of the patriarchs and prophets, who “spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” It is not a little remarkable that such a circumstance should exist in the sacred books of a people who were separated from all other nations for this express object, that they should bear a public and continual protest against polytheism; a people whose whole system of religious, political, and domestic usages was calculated, with consummate prudence and wisdom, to be a perpetual preservative from polytheistic notions; a people who were charged by the Eternal God to destroy every statue, structure, and grove that might recal the memory of idolatrous rites, and to extirpate every thing that could be extirpated, which had been associated with idolatry or might be converted into an instrument of its revival or of its slightest palliation; who were enjoined to abolish every name of city, village, or place, which was compounded with the name of a heathen deity, and to substitute new appellations; who were not even to pronounce those names unless necessity compelled;*—it is not, we may well say, a little remarkable that, in the sacred books of such a people, books whose very words, in many cases at least, were selected and dictated by the inspiration of Jehovah, the ordinary name and style of the Only Living and True God should be in a *plural* form?—Did some strange and insuperable necessity lie in the way? Was the language so poor, that it could furnish no

* See Deut. xii. xiii. Ex. xxiii. 13,

other term? Or if so, could not the wisdom of inspiration have suggested a new appellative, and have for ever abolished the hazardous word?—None of these reasons existed. The language was rich and copious.* The names of the Deity in general and constant use were more numerous than in either of the beautiful languages of classical antiquity, or in the most cultivated tongues of modern Europe. Besides “that glorious and fearful name, JEHOVAH,” the appropriated and unique style of the True God, and besides other unexceptionable names, there was (as we have before said) the *singular* form, ELOAH, of the very word in question. There was no shadow of necessity, difficulty, or even inducement, for the adoption of a phraseology which, *on Unitarian principles*, every candid mind must confess, can with difficulty, if at all be defended from the charge of pernicious example and very dangerous tendency.

But, “the connexion between words and ideas is perfectly arbitrary;”† the Hebrew was originally the language of polytheists, to whose opinions the word *Elohim* was perfectly conformable; and, when the Deity was pleased to make that language the vehicle of his revealed will, it was not worth while to innovate on its established forms; it

* Judging of it, not from the remains of the proper Hebrew alone, of which we have only the Old Testament, but from its cognate dialects, especially the Arabic.

† *Calm Inq.* p. 5.

was sufficient to convey true ideas under the old terms.*

If we admit the premises assumed in this argument, precarious as they are, the conclusion by no means follows. It is strongly opposed by the facts above adverted to in the constitutions of the Israelitish nation; which indicate so extreme a sensibility, such an all-pervading vigilance, for the abolition of every action and every word that might imply a favourable association with the polytheism and idolatry which either then prevailed or had in prior times existed.

If it be proposed to remove the difficulty by referring to the rule of the Hebrew idiom before mentioned, these objections will lie against the admission of this as an adequate solution.

1. The existence of such a rule we have shewn to be at least questionable.

2. If it be received, there seems to be no reason for the attachment of this note of dignity and majesty to *Eloah* and *Adon*, while it is not given to

* This solution is proposed by Professor Eichhorn. "Ex nostrâ sententiâ hic pluralis indicio est linguam Hebræam sub Polytheismo adolevisse; eo verò profligato, pluralis hic in sensum abiit majestatis et dignitatis." "In my opinion this plural is a proof that the Hebrew language was formed when Polytheism was the prevailing religion; on the destruction of which this form sunk into the expression of majesty and dignity." *Simon. Lex.* p. 120.

other names of the Deity, which, being appellatives, stand in at least equal need of some mark of distinction and eminence.

3. Admitting, however, that there existed some reason to us undiscoverable for thus signaling these particular words, the Hebrew language possesses the more direct method of making the distinction, by appropriate epithets; a method constantly in use by the writers of the Old Testament, and liable to no misinterpretation; whereas there were the most cogent reasons, as we have seen, for avoiding the particular mode under consideration, even were it much more indubitably an idiom of the language than can be pretended.

It is further observable that the Rabbinical writers, even while supporting their alleged rule, recognize a designed plurality in the name *Elohim*, and say that it is expressive of the manifold faculties or operations of the Deity. “*Elohim*: its explanation is *Possessor of all powers*: and for this reason he [Moses] does not say *El*, nor *Eloah*, but *Elohim* in the plural number. So also, *He is the Holy God* [*Elohim kedoshim*, Josh. xxiv. 19.] because he perfectly comprizes all holinesses.”*

This is, I trust, a correct statement of the facts in relation to this topic. The question arising from them is, Whether from this peculia-

* Rabbi Bechai on Gen. i. 1. ap. Buxtorf. *Thesaur.* p. 397.

rity in the phraseology of the Hebrew scriptures, any allusion, presumption, or implication can be justly inferred, in favour of the doctrine of a plurality of intelligent subsistences united in the one divine essence ?

The negative is maintained by many of the most learned Trinitarians, among whom are Calvin, Mercer, Pareus, Drusius, the two Buxtorfs, Frederic Spanheim, G. J. Vossius, Leusden, Marckius, J. D. Michaelis, and Eichhorn: and among the supporters of the affirmative are found, Junius, Polyander, Piscator, James Alting, Danzius, Hoornbeek, Leidekker, van Mastricht, Buddeus. But the principal objections of the former class are precluded by the positions, that this circumstance is regarded merely as an allusive testimony and not as a direct and independent argument; and that it is supposed to imply only the general notion of plurality, and not a specification of *Three* Divine subsistences: and those authors have remarkably overlooked a material part of the case. the apposition of plural attributives with the noun *Elohim*.

The affirmative opinion is censured by the Calm Inquirer as “ a trifling argument,” for reasons which claim our attention.*

* “ The word *Elohim*, which is commonly translated ‘ God,’ in the original is in a plural form, and is thought by some to imply a plurality of persons in the divine essence.—*Answer*. This is a trifling argument. In all languages it is a common anomaly

1. "In all languages it is a common anomaly for words of a plural form to have a singular signification." The Inquirer has not produced any instance, and I apprehend that it would not be easy to find one that would prove unexceptionable. There are, indeed, in most languages (perhaps, as the Inquirer affirms "in *all*,") words whose singular has gone into disuse, and whose plural form stands in the common Lexicons, and is rendered by a singular term in Latin or English: but I am greatly mistaken if, in every such instance, the rational philologist cannot trace an original and designed plurality.*

2. "The word *Elohim* is almost uniformly used in apposition with singular verbs." This is a part of the very case to be accounted for. It is not so with the "words of a plural form" in other languages, which the author says "have a singular signification:" they are always put in apposition with plural attributives. But, if we content our-

for words of a plural form to have a singular signification. The word *Elohim* is almost uniformly used in apposition with singular verbs. It is not limited, like Jehovah, to express the Supreme Being alone: and though in a plural form, it commonly expresses one object only. It stands for one Angel, Judges xiii. 22;—for one golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 31;—for one idol, Judges xvi. 17;—for Moses, Exod. iv. 16; vii. 1;—and for Samuel, 1 Sam, xxviii. 13." *Calm Inq.* p. 304, 305.

* Proofs may be found in *Schultensii Inst. Hebr.* p. 178. *Schroederi Inst. Hebr.* p. 129. *G. J. Vossii Etymologicon Ling. Lat.* under *Tenebræ* and similar words. *Johnson's Grammat. Commentaries*, p. 184—214.

selves with regarding the apposition of *Elohim* with singular verbs, adjectives, and pronouns, as a Hebrew idiom of which no other account can be given than that so we find it; what can we say upon the other part of the case, the construction with PLURAL attributives? It is *this* which forms the great peculiarity of our question: it is *this*, upon which the chief stress of the argument is laid for an allusion or implication in favour of the doctrine of a Divine plurality:—but upon *this* the Inquirer is silent! It is manifest that, whatever validity can be supposed to belong to his reason against that notion from the use of *singular* attributives, must fall with equal weight on the other side of the scale when applied to the instances in which the apposition is made regularly with *plural* attributives. All that he can contrive to diminish the difficulty on the one side, goes to increase its pressure on the other.

3. “It is not limited, like *Jehovah*, to express the Supreme Being alone.” For this very reason, then, it became the more necessary to guard against possible and probable abuse. As the word was in ordinary use to designate the numerous false deities of the nations, it was the more likely, and even unavoidable, that the Hebrews would understand its perpetual occurrence in the plural form as the designation of their own God, as an express intimation that *plurality* in some sense belonged to HIM; while, from other infallible testimonies, they were absolutely certain of His Essential

Unity. Combined with this consideration, the often cited passage cannot but appear a *very observable* one to the really *calm* and impartial inquirer; “Hear, O Israel; Jehovah our Elohim, One Jehovah!”* This sentence was proclaimed as a kind of oracular *effatum*, a solemn and authoritative principle to the Israelites; and it certainly requires to be attentively considered. Had it been the intention to assert such an unity in the Divine nature as is absolutely solitary and exclusive of any modification of plurality, I submit to the critical reader whether the expression would not of necessity have been this;—“Hear, O Israel; Jehovah our Elohim, one Eloah!” But, as the words actually stand, they appear to be in the most definite and expressive manner designed to convey the idea that, *notwithstanding* a real plurality intimated in the form Elohim, Jehovah is still ONE.

4. “Though in a plural form, it commonly expresses one object only:—” &c. Let us examine the instances adduced.

“It stands for one angel, Judges xiii. 22.” Manoah said, “We shall surely die, for we have seen *Elohim*.” It is evident, from the apprehension here expressed, that Manoah regarded the Angel of Jehovah, who had appeared to him, as God. Of course, he would make use of the ordinary appellation.

* Deut. vi. 4.

“—for one golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 4, 31.” It is probable that there was something in the figure of the statue which gave it a multiform appearance, for in this verse both the pronoun and the verb are plural: “*These* (אלה) are thy Elohim, O Israel, who *brought thee up* (העלוך te *adduxerunt*) out of the land of Egypt.” Besides, it is evident that, however blameable was Aaron’s conduct on this occasion, his intention was to make the statue a symbol of the True God: he proclaimed, for the morrow, “a festival to Jehovah.” v. 5.

“—for one idol, Judges xvi. 23, 24.” to which add 1 Sam. v. 7. It is certain that, in these instances, Dagon is called by the Philistines, “Our Elohim: but there are two reasons to bar the conclusion that therefore *Elohim* is used in a sense strictly and properly singular. (1.) It is probable that some notion of plurality was expressed by the figure of the image, as we have supposed in the case of the golden calf. It is generally admitted that the statue of Dagon was a compound of the human and the fish-like form;* and it probably was, in its original intention, a symbol of Noah and his family preserved in the ark. (2.) It is agreeable to the gradation which obtains in all languages, as before observed, that words become extended by figurative applications and by usage, to secondary and less proper acceptations; and thus *Elohim* would acquire an application to sin-

* *Lucian.* (seu auct. incert.) *de Deâ Syriâ*, ed. Helmstadt, 1725, p. 8. *Selden de Diis Syris*, Syntagm. ii. cap. 3.

gular objects, which I readily admit that it has, though the examples are of infrequent occurrence :* but our question is about the proper, primary, and direct signification of the word.

“ —for Moses, *Exod. iv. 16. vii. 1.*” It is scarcely credible that the Calm Inquirer can have given himself the trouble of looking at these references, when he copied them, with the very error of the figures, from Schlictingius.† It is evident that the application of the word *Elohim* to Moses, proves nothing with regard to the meaning of that word. Indeed it can hardly be said to be applied to Moses at all ; as the sense is so palpably limited to his acting, on the occasion, as the immediate messenger and representative of the Most High. “Thou shalt be to him (אלהים) *for, as, or instead of Elohim.*” In chap. vii. 1. the prefix indeed is not added, but the meaning is equally impossible to be mistaken : “And Jehovah said to Moses, Observe, I have appointed thee *Elohim* to Pharaoh ; and Aaron thy brother shall be thine interpreter : thou shalt speak the whole that I shall command thee, and Aaron thy brother shall speak to Pharaoh.”

* To the collection of Schlictingius and the Calm Inquirer I can only add 1 Sam. v. 7. mentioned above ; 1 Kings xi. 33, and 2 Kings i. 2, 3. Amos v. 26. may also be adduced, though the translation “the star of your gods,” would be equally strict, and would equally suit the connexion.

† *Schlicting. adv. Meisner.* p. 169. from whom all these examples are taken, except that of Samuel.

“—and for Samuel, 1 Sam. xxviii. 13.” Whatever the impostress saw, or pretended to see, her words undeniably affirm a plurality of objects: “I see *gods ascending* (אלהים עולים *Elohim olim*, the participle being plural to agree with the noun; *deos ascendentes; des dieux montans;*) out of the earth.” The figure of Samuel could, therefore, have been only one form out of several: so that to regard *Elohim* as here an appellation given to Samuel, is both begging the question, and a violation of the plain grammar of the passage.

Thus, of the five examples which the Calm Inquirer brings to support his assertion, all are irrelevant except one, and that equally fails to answer his purpose. He might have adduced a much more plausible objection, in the form of an *argumentum ad hominem*. If *Elohim* be a name of Deity formed upon the implication of a Trinity of subsistences in the Divine Unity, how can it be said “*unto the Son, Thy throne, O Elohim, is for ever and ever?*”

This difficulty, I humbly conceive, is fairly and sufficiently removed by the consideration lately referred to; the occasional application of the term to objects strictly singular, by a secondary usage derived from the proper signification.

We have thus endeavoured to present a faithful view of the whole evidence on both sides of this celebrated question. After the closest attention that I can give to all the parts of the case, the im-

pression on my mind is favourable to the opinion that this peculiarity of idiom *originated* in a design to *intimate* a plurality in the nature of the One God; and that thus, in connection with other circumstances calculated to suggest the same conception, it was intended to excite and prepare the minds of men for the more full declaration of this unsearchable mystery, which should in proper time be granted. This supposition implies, of course, a divine direction in the origin, or in the application, of the term: and the intention which we suppose, was merely to *intimate*,* not to give an absolute declaration. Now such a system of intimations, we know, existed under the earlier dispensations of revealed knowledge, with regard to a variety of truths, the clear manifestation of which was reserved for the brightness of the gospel-day. Under such a system, it would be a necessary consequence that the design would be understood, and the intimation apprehended, in various degrees, according to the piety, intelligence, and attention of different persons; and, in all probability, the careless majority would pay no attention to it at all. The prophets themselves, by whom the Spirit of Christ testified, did not fully comprehend the meaning of their own declarations: of course they could not be acquainted with the full and precise bearings of the very terms and expressions which they were directed to use. This will account for the degree of difficulty which hangs upon the question, and for the resistance opposed to any Trinitarian argument from it by

* See Note [D] at the end of this Section.

the modern Jews. To the arguments of the *Calm Inquiry* I have added, as is my duty, the statement of whatever stronger objections I could discover; but I still think that the less difficulty and the weightier evidence lie on the other side.*

It was observed that the intimation which we have supposed, is to be taken in connection with *other circumstances* calculated to suggest the same conception. These circumstances are of two classes.

The first consists of two or three instances of the use of the first person plural in reference to the Divine Being. Gen. i. 26. "And Elohim said, *let us make* man in *our* image, according to *our* likeness," chap. iii. 22. "And Jehovah Elohim said, Behold the man is become as *one of us*," chap. xi. 7. "Come; *we will go down* and there *we will confound* their language," Is. vi. 9. "And I heard the voice of the Lord (Adonai) saying, Whom shall I send, and who shall go *for us*."

* The readiness and satisfaction with which the Inquirer catches at a new reading, in order to set aside one text which has been looked upon as belonging to the class under consideration, seems to betray a latent feeling that the argument from the same form of expression is, in itself, not "trifling." The becoming and deserved respect which he professes for Dr. Kennicott's critical judgment, will, I trust, not be forgotten on many other occasions in which this volume has been indebted to that learned and indefatigable person's biblical labours. "In Eccles. xii. 1. the received text reads, 'Remember thy Creators:' and from this plural form a plurality of persons has been inferred. But Dr. Kennicott has shown that the best manuscripts have the singular number." *Calm Inq.* p. 306.

The Calm Inquirer notices two of these passages, and decides upon them in his accustomed peremptory manner.* But we want evidence, not summary assertion.

We need not to be told that the “dramatic way of writing” by dialogue and direct speeches, characterizes the style of the Hebrew scriptures, and of the most ancient examples which we possess of profane narratives. But how can the Inquirer affirm, “This is *nothing more*?” Would it not have been equally dramatic, had the inspired author written, *I will make, I will go down, I will confound*? That which these speeches possess “*more than the dramatic*” form, is *the whole* of the subject to be considered. A more gross instance of the *non causa pro causâ* it would be difficult to find.—Neither do we suppose that the Deity actually made use of vocal speech in the exercises of his creative energy, or on the other occasions

* “The plural number is sometimes used when God is introduced as speaking. Gen. i. 26. xi. 7.—*Answer*. This is nothing more than the author’s dramatic way of writing. We are not to suppose that God actually said to the waters, ‘Bring forth abundantly,’ or to the birds and fishes, ‘Be fruitful and multiply.’ Perhaps the expression ‘Let there be’ may denote energy;—and ‘Let us make’ may denote forethought; and upon this occasion such language might be employed by the writer to intimate that man is the noblest work of God, the most distinguished production of divine power and wisdom in this world. Dr. Geddes says that the Jews understood these words to have been addressed to the surrounding angels: but there is no need to have recourse to this supposition.” P. 305, 306.

referred to. This style was undoubtedly adopted as the most conformable with the fresh and lively sensibility of mankind in the first periods of literary composition, and it partakes of the *anthropopathia* which the Spirit of inspiration condescended so largely to employ in the Old Testament writings.* The language and manner was doubtless the best adapted for conveying to the men of the earliest ages, the simple truth, that the Deity brought into existence the first human being and ancestor of all human kind, in a state of holiness and happiness, by the immediate exertion of almighty power. But this is foreign to the question, which is plainly and only, Why is the *plural* pronoun used, when the singular was required by the subject, and would have been not only equally “dramatic,” but indeed more terse and vigorous and striking? The Inquirer does not even attempt a reply to the question, except by some vague and gratuitous conjectures: for he would scarcely deign to accept of the fancy of a council held with the angels, which he cites from Geddes and the Rabbinical interpreters.†

* At the same time I must profess that it appears to me a very rational and probable reason for the frequent and copious attribution to the Deity of human affections and actions, which is modestly proposed by Dr. Owen; “That the whole Old Testament, wherein God perpetually treats with men by an assumption of human affections unto himself,—proceeded from *the person of the Son*, in a preparation for and prospect of his future incarnation.” *On the Person of Christ*: chap. vii.

† Philo also maintained this notion, and it was congenial with the character of his system. But let it be observed how strongly

Various other solutions have been proposed by those who are unwilling to allow of a Trinitarian implication : such as that this is the style of dignity in the Speaker, or an expression of importance in the purpose, or a moral lesson of deliberation, or a rhetorical *anacænosis* embracing inferior beings in a kind of condescending collocation, or simply that such is the manner of speech and that no further inquiry is necessary.* The solution adopted by Dr. Priestley is that of “the writer ascribing to the Divine Being the style of a sovereign prince.”† This had been proposed by Aben Ezra and other Jews, and probably a more plausible one has not been invented.‡ But we have no

he affirms that a *plurality* is indubitably signified by the terms. Τοῦ ΠΟΙΗΣΩΜΕΝ πλῆθος ἐμφαίνοντος—τὸ ὩΣ ἘΙΣ ἩΜΩΝ οὐκ ἐφ’ ἐνός, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ πλειόνων, τίθεται. “The expression *Let us make* manifests a plurality :—the expression *As one of us* is put to signify not one, but many.” *Philo, ed. Mangey, tom. i. p. 430, 431.*

* The ingenious and critically versatile George Enjedin, Superintendant of the Socinian Churches in Transylvania, who died in 1597, “and was regarded as one of the best writers in what is called the Socinian cause;” (*Dr. Rees’s Cyclopæd. art. Enjedin*), after detailing most of these, and some other conjectures, concludes with exhibiting his talent at versifying !

“Sed homini non curioso satis debet esse τὸ ὅτι.

Videmus pluralia sæpe pro singularibus poni.

Id fit, quia usui et hominibus ita placuit,

Quos penes arbitros jus est et norma loquendi.”

Explic. Locorum; p. 19.

† *Notes on SS. vol. i. p. 6.*

‡ *Buxtorf. Thesaur. p. 398, 399.* The perplexity felt by the Jews of the middle ages appears by their inventing this childish

reason to think that this style had been brought into use in the days of Moses ; nor till many ages afterwards, when the simplicity of earlier times gave way to the degeneracy and arrogance of princes.

The second class of passages in the Old Testament which, when taken in connection with all the other circumstances that have been brought forwards, are supposed to excite the conception of a plurality in the One Divine Nature, and to prepare for the more full revelation of that doctrine,—are those which seem to mention, allude to, or imply more than one Divine subsistence or person. These we shall enumerate.

Num. vi. 22—27. “And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, Thus ye shall bless the children of Israel, by saying to them,

“Jehovah bless thee, and keep thee !

“Jehovah spread the light of his presence upon thee, and be gracious to thee !

story. “Rabbi Samuel bar Nachman said that Moses, when in writing the law he was come to the place where he was by divine dictation to write, *Let us make man*, paused, and replied to God, *Lord of the world, why dost thou afford an occasion for error, with respect to thy most simple unity?* But that the Lord answered, *Moses, write thou so ; and he that desires to err, let him err.*’ —*Bereshith Rabba*, ap. *Manassis ben Israelis Conciliatorem* ; in *Gen. qu. vi.*

“Jehovah lift up his presence upon thee, and appoint to thee peace !

“So shall they put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.”

The exact triplicity of this divinely prescribed formula, and the correspondence in the significancy of the very terms with the apostolic benediction, may be considered as a natural and proper allusion to a Trinity of subsistences in the Divine Being. The first member of the formula expresses the benevolent and efficient “love of God,” the Father of mercies and Fountain of all good ; the second well comports with the redeeming and reconciling “grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ;” and the last is appropriate to the purity, consolation, and joy which are received from “the communion of the Holy Spirit.” There is no room for the objection that this argument would imply three Jehovahs ; because the Trinitarian doctrine is that all the names and attributes of Deity are applicable to that adorable Nature, both absolutely, and in relation to each of the Modifications of Subsistence under which we believe that it is by revelation exhibited to us.

Isaiah vi. 1—5, 9. We have before seen what strong grounds there are for regarding this passage as a testimony to the Divine Person of the Messiah.* It is also observable that the apostle

* Book II. chap. iv. § 18.

Paul prefaces a citation from it by saying, “Justly did the *Holy Spirit* speak to our fathers by Isaiah the prophet;”^{*} and this could be only one case of the general principle, that “prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke, being influenced by the Holy Spirit.”[†] Those who contend that the term HOLY SPIRIT expresses merely the operative energy of God, will perhaps pay little regard to this observation; but I presume to think that truly impartial and equitable inquirers after truth will find reason for a different opinion. Yet, if we waive these references to the authority of the New Testament, we find on the surface of this passage circumstances calculated to strike the attention of the original hearer or reader, and to excite the conception of a plurality of some kind in the Infinite Essence. The threefold term of adoration, and the plural pronoun which follows, seem to me calculated to produce this impression: “Holy, Holy, Holy, Jehovah of hosts!—Whom shall I send, and who shall go for us?”—

Isaiah xlviii. 16. “Draw near to me, hearken ye to this: from the beginning I have not spoken in concealment; from the time of its being, I [was] there: and now the Lord [*Adonai*] Jehovah hath sent ME and HIS SPIRIT.”

Some contend that this passage is uttered by the prophet in his own person, declaring that,

^{*} Acts xxviii. 25.

[†] 2 Pet. i. 21.

from the commencement of his ministry, he had delivered the divine messages, not in the enigmatical and artful manner of heathen pretenders, but plainly and openly; that he had been always ready to be brought to the test of the event of any prophecy that he had delivered; and that he now was sent with an express divine commission. But against this interpretation, the evident continuity of the discourse, and the violent abruptness which such a change of person requires, appear to be very strong objections. Nor is it only the plain series of the context that requires us to understand the whole as spoken by one Person, even the Creator of heaven and earth (v. 13); but the phraseology of the passage binds us to the same conclusion. The demand of attention is a repetition of the very form used before in v. 1, 12, and 14. The next clause, "I have not spoken in concealment," is repeated from chap. xlv. 19. where it is incontrovertibly uttered in the immediate person of Jehovah. The following clause, "from the time of its being [הייתה], I there," presents a difficulty from the gender of "it" suffixed to the substantive verb. To what does this feminine pronoun refer? I submit to the judgment of the candid critic, that the reference is to the feminine noun *אשר* understood by inference from *אשר* in the preceding clause. This figure in construction occurs not only in the Hebrew Scriptures, but in Greek and Latin authors.* Thus the sense will

* "Nomen genere discrepans ad intellectum referatur, aut ex textu ipso explicetur ratione antecedentis sententiæ." *Bur-*

be, “from the time that the beginning was, there I was;” exactly answering to the language of the Evangelist, “In the beginning was the Word:—the same was in the beginning with God.” That the whole context is in the person of the Messiah, and that it ultimately respects the conversion of the Jews, has been shewn by able interpreters.* The last word וְרוּחוֹ “and his Spirit,” is from its position properly and naturally the accusative.

Thus, the more closely we examine this text, the more we are led to perceive it to be the declaration of Him whose “hand founded the earth, and his right hand expanded the heavens,” and who is “from the beginning;—but whom “the Father set apart, and sent into the world.”† The mutual illustration of this passage, and many in the New Testament, cannot but rise to the recollection of the serious reader. In prophecy the Messiah declares, “The Lord Jehovah hath sent Me and his Spirit;” and, when actually sojourning with men,—“I came forth from the Father, and I have come into the world;—the Comforter whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify concerning me.”‡

torf. Thesaur. p. 323—325.—“An adjective often agrees with the signification, and not with the termination, of a noun; or with a more general term.” *Dr. Jones’s Lat. Gramm.* p. 98; his *Greek Gramm.* p. 179.

* See Note [E] at the end of this Section.

† Joh. x. 36.

‡ Joh. xvi. 28. xv. 26.

Dan. ix. 4. “ And I prayed to Jehovah my God, and I confessed, and I said, I beseech thee, O Lord [Adonai] the Great and Awful God—&c. 17. And now, hear, O our God, the prayer of thy servant and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary which is desolate, for the Lord’s [Adonai] sake,—19. O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord [Adonai, in each instance,] hearken and do ; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God.—”

There appears to be no just or probable reason that can be given for the clause in v. 17. which introduces Adonai in the terms of personal distinction from the Adonai who is immediately addressed ; unless we admit that a conception of such distinction, however imperfect and obscure, was produced in the prophet’s mind by the Author of inspiration.

To these passages all those have an undoubted claim to be added, which mention an Angel of Jehovah, to whom they attribute characteristics of divinity. To the consideration of those passages the preceding Section has been devoted.

It now remains for the serious and intelligent inquirer to review the matter advanced in this Section, and to consider whether, from the frequent and remarkable use of plural names and attributives in application to the Deity, in the diversity of forms and coincidences which the in-

stances have presented, there does not arise a *presumption*, to say the least, that these peculiarities in the structure of the Old Testament were intended to communicate and to confirm the notion that a real plurality, though mysterious and thus revealed in distant glimpses, does exist in the undoubted but not less mysterious* Unity of the Divine Essence.

* Whoever has considered the Simplicity and Spirituality of Deity, and has thought upon the questions involved in those doctrines, will not think this intimation improper.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. XXXIII.

 Note [A] p. 347.

The etymology of this word has been much contested; some making it a compound of לֵא and יָ so as to signify *the Mighty Jah*; others deriving it from יָלֵא *to enter into an engagement by oath*, and thus signifying *the Being of sworn veracity and faithfulness*. The most reasonable and probable derivation, so far as I can judge, is that of Schultens, Reineccius, and a host of the most eminent orientalists; who make its primitive יָלֵא, which, though not occurring in the existing remains of the Hebrew, is preserved in the Arabic *alaha*, and denotes *to adore*. Hence the noun will signify *the object of adoration*, or as the illustrious Schultens well expresses it, NUMEN TREMENDUM:—*Comm. in Job.* vol. i. p. 3.

Note [B] p. 347.

“The singular form יָלֵא occurs chiefly in the poetical books;—twice in the Hymn of Moses (Deut. xxxii.), several times in the Prophets, forty times in the book of Job, and in the other books sixteen times: but the plural יָלֵאִים occurs about two thousand five hundred times.” *Simonis Lex. ab Eichhorn*, p. 119. Hal. 1793.

Note [C] p. 349.

1 Sam. iv. 8. contains four plural words in apposition with

Elohim ; but it is not enumerated here, since it is uttered in the person of polytheists. It adds, however, a strong confirmation to the other examples, as it shews their perfect conformity to the mode of expression used when an unquestionable plurality is signified. The same observation applies to 1 Kings xix. 2. There are some other passages which, for similar reasons are not here adduced; though perhaps it is an excess of caution which excludes some of them, particularly those in Ecclesiastes and Daniel. Gen. xxxi. "The Elohim of Abraham and the Elohim of Nahor *judge* [verb plur. *judicent* ;—*portent le jugement* ;] between us." But perhaps Laban might speak the language of polytheism. Deut. iv. 7. "What nation is so great, whose Elohim is *near* (adj. plur. *propinqui* ;—*prochains* ;] to it?" It may be understood of their false deities. Eccl. v. 7. "He who is High above the high observeth, and *High Ones* are above them." The latter appellation may denote orders of created being, superior to man. Dan. iv. 5, 6, 15. "Spirit of the *Holy God* [plur. *Elahin kadishin* ;—*Deorum sanctorum* ;—*des Dieux saints*."] It may be taken, as in the common version, for a polytheistic expression, though I think without sufficient reason.

Note [D] p. 367.

Though "the school of the Buxtorfs has been reproached, notwithstanding its acknowledged learning, with too great predilection for the Rabbinical doctrines" (*Dr. Rees's Cyclopædia*, article *Buxtorf*), and though, in his disquisition on this subject, the younger Buxtorf takes great pains to support the negative opinion with Calvin and others, yet, at the close, he acknowledges nearly, if not altogether, the opinion here supported. "Not that I think that this argument should be altogether rejected among Christians: for, upon the same principle on which not a few of the Jews, as we have seen, refer this emphatical application of the plural number to a plurality of powers, or of influences, or of operations, that is, *ad extra* ; why may not we refer it *ad intra*, to a plurality of persons and to personal works? Yea, who certainly knows what that was which the ancient Jews understood by this plurality of powers and faculties?" *Buxtorf. fil. Dissert. Philolog. Theolog.* Diss. v. § 44.

Also, this supposition of an obscure intimation precludes the chief objection of the late J. D. Michaelis, that “if *Elohim* conveyed a knowledge of the Holy Trinity, it would imply that that doctrine was more generally and familiarly known under the Old Testament, than it is under the New.” *Michaelis Suppl. ad Lexica Hebr.* vol. i. p. 88.

Note [E] p. 376.

Authors cited by Poole in his *Synopsis*, Calovius, Glassius in his *Philol. Sacra*, Lib. III. Tr. ii. Can. 13. Prebendary Lowth, Vitranga, &c. Some of the most rational and judicious of the Christian fathers have maintained this interpretation; and that, in the third century, the passage was held to be a prophecy of the Messiah, we have the evidence of Origen. “That the Saviour and the Holy Spirit were sent by the Father for the salvation of men, is manifest by the passage of Isaiah speaking in the person of the Saviour; *And now the Lord hath sent me and his Spirit*. It must, however, be observed that the expression is ambiguous; whether it should be understood, *God sent, and the Holy Spirit also sent, the Saviour*; or, as we take it, *The Father sent both the Saviour and the Holy Spirit*.” *Orig. Comment. in Matth.* cap. xiii. ap. *Opera*, ed. Delarue, tom. iii. p. 595.

The Chaldee Targum applies only the last clause to the prophet: “Draw near to my Word [*Memra*,] hear this; from the beginning I have not spoken in secret; from the time that the nations were dispersed from the fear of me, there I brought near Abraham your father to my worship. The prophet said, *And now the Lord God hath sent me and his Word* [*Memra*.]” Calvin has adopted this forced and unnatural parenthesis.

CHAP. V.

RECAPITULATION OF THE PRECEDING CHARACTERS OF THE
MESSIAH.

By a careful and impartial analysis, we have endeavoured to obtain the separate result of each leading part of the prophetic testimony to the Person and Character of the then future Messiah. Those results must now be placed in a connected review.

A series of prophecies, reaching from the commencement to the close of the ancient dispensations, has exhibited to us a GREAT DELIVERER from evil, originally and repeatedly promised by God,* and perpetually the object of the desire, expectation, and hope of the best and most enlightened men, and of those whom the Deity signalized by miraculous communications of his will.† In the process of those declarations, this great Personage came to be designated by a pre-eminent appropriation of the term MESSIAH, to express his excellent qualities and important offices.

* Gen. iii. 15. xxii. 18, &c. &c.

† Hag. ii. 7.

From those sources we have learned, that the Messiah was to be a real and proper human being;* the descendant of Adam, Abraham, and David ;† in some peculiar sense, the offspring of the woman;‡ the perfectly faithful and devoted servant of God ;§ the messenger, supreme in rank above all others, of divine authority and grace ;|| a heavenly teacher, inspired with the fulness of divine gifts and qualifications ;¶ the great and universal lawgiver, who should be the author and promulgator of a new, holy, and happy government over the moral principles, characters, and actions of men ;** a high priest, after a new and most exalted model ;†† the adviser of the wisest counsels ;‡‡ the pacificator and reconciler of rebellious man to God, and of men among themselves ;§§ the kind and powerful Saviour from all moral and natural evil.||||

The divine oracles have also informed us that, in the execution of these benevolent purposes, he should undergo the severest sufferings from the malice of the original tempter, from the ingratitude

* Gen. iii. 15, &c. &c.

† Gen. xxii. 18. 2 Sam. vii. 19, &c.

‡ Gen. iii. 15. I have not insisted on Jer. xxxi. 22. not being completely satisfied that it refers to this fact, though I think such interpretation very far from being absurd or improbable.

§ Is. xlii. 1. lii. 13.

|| Sect. xxxi. on the title *Angel of Jehovah*.

¶ Is. xi. 2.

** Deut. xviii. 18, 19. Is. ix. 7.

†† Ps. cx. 4.

‡‡ Is. ix. 6.

§§ Ib.

|||| 2 Sam. xxiii. 1—7. Job xix. 23—27. Is. xl. 10. xlv. 21.

and disobedience of men, and from the especial circumstance of his devoting himself a voluntary sacrifice to procure the highest benefits to those of mankind who should concur in his plan of mercy and holiness.*

They have assured us that, from his deep distresses, he should emerge to glory, victory, and triumph; that he should possess power, authority, and dominion, terrible to his determined adversaries, but full of blessing and happiness to his obedient followers; that he should gradually extend those benefits to all nations; and that his beneficent reign should be holy and spiritual in its nature, and in its duration everlasting.†

The testimony of heaven likewise describes him as entitled to the appellation of *Wonderful*; since he should be, in a sense peculiar to himself, the Son of God;§ as existing and acting during the patriarchal and the Jewish ages, and even from eternity;|| as the guardian and protector of his people;¶ as the proper object of the various affections of piety, of devotional confidence for obtaining the most important blessings, and of religious homage from angels and men.**

* Gen. iii. 15. Ps. xxii. lxix. Is. liii. &c. &c.

† Ps. ii. xlv. lxxii. cx. Is. xi. 5. Dan. vii. 13, 14.

‡ Is. ix. 6.

§ Ps. ii. 7. Is. ix. 6.

|| Ps. xl. 7—9. Mic. v. 2. and the Section on the title *Angel of Jehovah*.

¶ Is. xl. 9—11.

** Ps. ii. 12. xcvi. 7.

That testimony, finally, declares him to be the Eternal and Immutable Being,* the Creator,† God,‡ the Mighty God,§ Adonai,|| Elohim,¶ Jehovah.**

* Ps. cii. 25—29.

† Ps. cii. 26.

‡ and § Ps. xlv. 7. Is. xl. 11.

|| Is. ix. 6.

¶ Is. vi. 1. Mal. iii. 1.

** 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Is. vi. 5. viii. 13. xl. 3, 10. xlv. 21—25. Zech. xii. 10.

CHAP. VI.

INVESTIGATION OF THE GENERAL RESULT OF THIS
INDUCTION.

SUCH is the picture of the MESSIAH, drawn by the pencil of prophecy, while his coming was yet the object of hope and expectation. It combines *opposite*, and *apparently incompatible*, properties; those distinctive of the Uncreated and Unchangeable God; and those of a created and dependent mortal, ascending through sorrow and death to immortal life, glory, and happiness!—Is such a combination admissible?

There are only three ways in which this question can be treated by those who acknowledge the authority of revelation.

I. The premises may be denied. It may be maintained that the prophetic scriptures do not attribute the superior class of characters to the Messiah; and, of course, that in each instance of such deductions, we have been interpreting the scriptures fallaciously.

I am well aware of the influence of preconceived sentiments, and that, "where there is neither ignorance, nor negligence, nor studied mis-statement imputable to the translator" or interpreter, "prejudices in favour of certain theories and doctrines seduce him unconsciously into a misrepresentation of his author."* I can only say, therefore, that I have placed a jealous guard against this avenue to error; and that, in all the preceding disquisitions on the particular texts which are the basis of our conclusions, I have endeavoured to observe the strictest rules of criticism and interpretation. The attentive reader will, also, perceive that in the Recapitulation, no stress has been laid upon the more dubious passages. I have rested upon what I conscientiously believe to be the true signification of each of the remaining passages, elicited by the most cautious construction. The appeal can only be made to the understanding, the critical skill, and the serious reflection, of the impartial and upright reader.

II. The justness of our criticisms, and the general validity of the principles, may, perhaps, be admitted; while the conclusion is denied, upon the ground that the exalted language of the descriptions referred to is to be understood *improperly* and *figuratively*. The word *god*, it may be said, is in the scriptures applied to Moses as a

* Dr. Crombie's Gymnasium, vol. i. p. 75.

divine messenger, to angels, to the false deities of the heathen, and to magistrates, even when they were wicked men:* that word, therefore, with many of the attributives which the common ideas and language of men associate with it, may, with great propriety, be applied to the Messiah,

* “An idol was only called a god, as we call a picture by the name of what it represents.” (*Julius Bate's Reply to Sharp*, p. 58.) The following are, so far as I have been able to ascertain, all the instances of the other applications of this word. A bare inspection of them will verify the observation made in the first remark on this hypothesis.

אלהים applied to Moses; *Exod.* iv. 16. vii. 1.—To angels; *Ps.* viii. 5. xcvi. 7.—To the magistrates; *Exod.* xxi. 6. xxii. 8, 9. (In those three passages rendered *Judges.*) xxii. 28. *Ps.* lxxxii. 1, 6. cxxxviii. 1. But these were the magistrates of the Hebrew polity, which, being a peculiar and miraculous Theocracy, would with propriety admit of this application. The civil and ecclesiastical officers of the Israelitic state were expressly the vicegerents of Jehovah. Abräbenel (ap. *Buxtorf. de Nominibus Dei*, § 40.) argues that, in the passages cited for this signification, there is no sufficient foundation for the application assumed; but that they are to be understood in the same manner as, according to the usage of all civilized countries, the supreme magistrate is considered by the law as present in courts of national judicature. In our English courts of record, “the king is not said to appear by his attorney, as other men do; for he always appears, in contemplation of law, in his own proper person.” (*Blackstone*, book i. ch. vii. § 3.) So when it is said, “His master shall bring him to God,” the meaning is, to the court or tribunal of God; as, in *Deut.* xix. 17. it is expressed, “the men between whom the controversy is, shall stand before JEHOVAH,” which is immediately explained by the clause, “before the priests and the judges.” See also what has been advanced in Sect. XXXII. of the preceding Chapter.

who is confessedly entitled to higher honours than any other human being.

On this hypothesis we make two remarks.

1. In all the places where the term *Elohim* is used in the inferior sense mentioned, it is so surrounded by circumstances of modification and explanation, that it is rendered impossible to be misunderstood; and in general the reason of the application is sufficiently intimated. On comparison of those places with the passages which ascribe the same appellative, or equivalent ones, to the Messiah, the contrast will appear most striking.

2. The solution is not sufficient, for it does not meet all the facts of the case. The Messiah is not barely termed *God*, in the prophetic descriptions; but a copiousness of epithet and attribute, a profusion of diversified and lofty description, is employed in connection with the names of divinity. These adjuncts do not permit us to understand the names referred to, in any lower or accommodated sense; but they incontrovertibly ascribe the most peculiar and exalted characters of Supreme Deity.

III. The remaining solution is that which, admitting without suppression or evasion all the declarations in scripture which form the phænomena

of the case, goes the full length of their conclusion; and thus ascribes to the promised Messiah the actual possession of TWO NATURES, the *human* with all its essential properties, and the DIVINE with all its inseparable perfections.

The only objection, not already anticipated, to this inference is, that no evidence can make it credible, because it is *impossible*: we must, therefore, either believe that the language of the Jewish prophets was not that of sober truth, but was the exaggeration of fancy, the mere colouring of poetry;* or suppose that, with all our caution and scrupulosity, we have totally failed to understand that language.

But, upon what grounds is this allegation of impossibility made?

Will it be held *impossible* that OMNIPOTENCE should form a human creature, with the express design of constituting an union or conjunction with that human creature; such an union or conjunction as shall be perpetual, while yet the distinctive

* Probably the author of the *Calm Inquiry* would not hesitate to accept this part of the alternative, if we may judge from the bold dogmatism of those assertions, which, for any thing that appears, he expects his readers to admit without further question: such, for example, as this; "No conclusion can be drawn from the obscure and figurative language of prophecy." P. 312.

properties of each nature are preserved without confusion?—*

—He who affirms this to be impossible, is surely bound first to prove to us that he has “found out the Almighty unto perfection.”

Or will it be maintained that, though Omnipotence could effect this, yet no circumstances could possibly occur in which it would be *becoming* the WISDOM of God to produce such an union?

No man of reason, modesty, or piety, will venture on this assertion: but every such man will admit that the Infinite Being is alone competent to know, whether such a proceeding would be worthy of Himself in any circumstances; and, if ever proper, what circumstances would render it so.

The pretence of impossibility is absurd, arrogant, and blasphemous. The question is a question of fact, and can be decided only by its proper evidence, *competent testimony*; the testimony of the scriptures, the declaration of His word who cannot be mistaken and who cannot deceive.

* “——No impossible, no inconceivable thing. It is absurd, and very irreligious presumption, to say, This cannot be. If a worm were so far capable of thought, as to determine this or that concerning *our* nature; and that such a thing were impossible to belong to it, which we find to be in it;—we should trample upon it. More admirable DIVINE patience spares us!” *Howe’s Calm and Sober Enquiry concerning the Possibility of a Trinity in the Godhead*, § 16.

That testimony we have endeavoured fairly and impartially to ascertain : and, if we have not been altogether unsuccessful in our attempts to avoid fallacy in argument, we might here close our pleadings. Jesus of Nazareth, all who are called Christians acknowledge to be the long-promised and expected Messiah : therefore, ALL the properties and characters by which the records of divine prophecy have described the Messiah, MUST belong to him, in their strictest and most entire signification. Did the Christian scriptures do no more than afford satisfactory evidence of the simple proposition, *Jesus is the Messiah* ;—we should be obliged by necessary inference from the prophetic descriptions, and by all the rules of honest criticism and interpretation, to conclude that his person comprized the unique and mysterious *union* of humanity and DEITY.

But the Christian scriptures are not thus bare and scanty in their information. It must appear previously probable, and it will turn out to be true in fact, that the writings of the inspired apostles confirm and amplify the descriptions of prophecy, by more full and clear statements of the truth respecting the Person, as well as the works and offices of HIM to whom they bear witness. The careful investigation of those writings, with a view to elicit their genuine and unaltered sense on this subject, will be our endeavour in the sequel of this Inquiry.

CHAP. VII.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE STATE OF OPINION AND EXPECTATION
WITH RESPECT TO THE MESSIAH, EXISTING AMONG THE
JEWS IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE CLOSING OF THE OLD
TESTAMENT AND THE DISSOLUTION OF THEIR NATIONAL
ESTABLISHMENT.

It is a natural and proper inquiry whether we have any information of the manner in which the Jews understood the prophecies concerning the Messiah, in the interval between the closing of the Old Testament and the general diffusion of Christianity. Such information, though it would not possess determining authority, could not fail to be interesting; and, as the acceptation of terms in ancient languages is a matter of testimony, it would furnish a valuable addition to our means of ascertaining the genuine sense of the prophecies referred to.

The period in question, however, was not the most advantageous for the preservation and increase of accurate religious knowledge. Its earlier part was chiefly filled up with political commotions, the contentions of ambitious parties, and an incessant and sanguinary series of

struggles for national independence :* its close was marked with the contemptible superstitions of one class of the community, the courtly libertinism of another, and the ferocious exasperation of the third. On the moral state of the former portion of this time we know with certainty very little : but in regard to the latter, we have sufficient evidence that the doctrines of religion were corrupted to the very first principles, and that its profession and practice had lost almost every character of a reasonable service. Indeed, the most favourable estimate of the whole period will not prepare us to expect the evidences of much skill or accuracy in the interpretation of the sacred oracles and in the statement of the sentiments which they were designed to convey.

It is, then, no subject of surprize, that our materials are few and small for the conduct of this inquiry. The number of Jewish writers, during this period, is not great : but the parts of their writings which bear on the present, or any other,

* “ Idolatry was not introduced into the second temple ; but then no prophets, no zealous reformers, arose, to restore the worship of God when it had gone into neglect. The Asmonæans designed to satisfy their ambition, rather than to reform the church. Those heroes, so much admired as they are and esteemed as saints, can never be justified for depriving of the crown and sovereignty the house of David, whose posterity languished in disgraceful poverty. They usurped the priesthood, which belonged to the family of Eleazar ; as they had done the kingdom, which belonged to that of David. *Basnage's Hist. of the Jews*, b. i. ch. i.

theological question, are in proportion still more scanty. The works which fall under this description are the Ancient Syriac Version of the Old Testament, the Greek Version commonly called that of the *Septuagint* or the Seventy Translators, the Chaldee Targums or Paraphrases, the writings of certain Alexandrian and other Jews usually called the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, the works of Philo and Josephus, and any fragments of information which may be found in the Rabbinical writings.

SECT. I.

ON THE SYRIAC AND THE SEPTUAGINT VERSIONS.

THE Syriac Version of the Old Testament is considered by critics as of an antiquity prior to the Christian era,* as having been made directly from the Hebrew text, and as bearing the marks of superior ability and faithfulness. What peculiar readings it has presented in the preceding analysis of passages, have been carefully noted. It is a strict version; and it is remarkably clear and strong in those passages which attribute characters of Deity to the Messiah.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the Septuagint Translation was made at different times, by different persons, and with very various degrees of merit.† Its unsupported testimony is not of much weight, in any instance of doubtful criticism: and its character is particularly low in relation to those parts of scripture which have been the

* The arguments prefixed to the Psalms indicate a Christian composer, and were probably added long after the version was made.

† See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

principal objects of our attention. In all those cases, however, where its variations are of the smallest importance, they have been carefully noted. As far as I can form a general opinion from so imperfect materials, it is this; that those translators had faint ideas of the doctrine and promise of a Messiah. The Alexandrian Jews, living out of Palestine, having disused the Hebrew language, being immersed in worldly pursuits, and daily associating with their heathen neighbours, were more likely than the Jews of Judea, to become indifferent to "the hope of Israel."

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

TO

SECT. I.

 Note [A] p. 396.

“ The books of Moses are more consonant to the Hebrew than the other books are.” *Hieronym. Proœm. Quæst. Hebr. in Gen. in Op. tom i. p. 378. ed. Colon. 1616.* “ The churches of Christ do not read the prophet Daniel according to the Lxx. but use the version of Theodotion. What was the reason I know not : this only I can affirm, that it widely departs from the truth, and was set aside on good grounds.” *Ejusd. in Dan. Præf.* “ The translation of Ezekiel closely adheres to the Hebrew. Whence it appears to me unaccountable, supposing the same persons to have translated all the books, that some parts of their work should have been so extremely different from others.” *Ejusd. in Ezech. Præf.* “ Isaiah has had the hard fate to meet with a translator altogether unworthy of him, there being hardly any book of the Old Testament so ill rendered in that version as this of Isaiah. Add to this, that the version of Isaiah as well as other parts of the Greek version, is come down to us in a bad condition, incorrect, and with frequent omissions and interpolations.” *Bishop Lowth's Prelim. Diss. to Isaiah, p. 66.*

The very learned Hugh Broughton conceived that he had discovered, in the longer books of the Lxx., internal marks of a change in the translator at the close of portions averaging each about fourteen chapters of the present division.—“ They were

not all," he says, "equally competent. The translators of the Pentateuch have shewn much ability; though he who rendered the words of God to Cain (Gen. iv. 7.) either intentionally concealed their meaning, or was a mere child in Hebrew. The translators of the Historical Books were very able; as also those of the Proverbs and Psalms. The translator of Job was a reader of the Greek poets, and was more careful to employ classical idioms than to produce an uniformly exact version. The translator of Ecclesiastes understood Greek better than Hebrew. The translator of Amos was the best of all: of Ezekiel, very learned.—They often *abridge* rather than translate; as in Esther and in many places of the Prophets." *Letter to the Nobility, &c. of England.*

SECT. II.

ON THE CHALDEE TARGUMS, AND THEIR USE OF THE
PHRASE, *The Word of Jah.*

ABOUT seventy passages in the Old Testament are applied by the writers of the ancient Chaldee Paraphrases to the Messiah, in the most express manner. Every instance that appeared of sufficient importance in relation to the texts brought under consideration, has been presented in the preceding pages. Though the number of such is not great, they have sufficiently shewn that the writers did not refrain from ascribing to the Messiah the titles and attributes of the Supreme God.

It has been often remarked that, in instances innumerable, those writers translate the Hebrew JEHOVAH by the expression *The Word of the LORD*.* On this circumstance much argument has been built. Some have maintained, that it supplies an indubitable ascription of personal existence to the *Word*, in some sense distinct from the personal existence of the Supreme Father; that this *Word* is the *Logos*† of the New Testament; and conse-

* מִמְרָא דִּי the Memra of Jah.

† John i. 1.

quently that the phrase is a proof of a belief among the ancient Jews in the pre-existence, the personal operations, and the deity, of the Messiah, "the Word, who became flesh, and fixed his tabernacle among us." Others have thought that the phrase is a mere idiom, denoting the person's *self* to whom it is attributed, and therefore equivalent to nothing more than an emphatical pronoun. On this question, as on most points of controversy, a general answer cannot be given. We must examine and distinguish.

I. The date of the earliest and most valuable Targums may be safely assumed as not much exceeding, nor much below, the first century of the Christian era. All acknowledge that, during that period, the theology and religion of the Jews had become extremely corrupt. But, as in an advancing state of society there will always be some who outstrip their contemporaries, so, in a degenerating state, there are found individuals whose knowledge bears the character of the departed, more than of the existing, age. The summits of the mountains catch the last feeble rays of the sun, when all below is covered with shade. The sentiments and phraseology of a Boethius, for example, are not to be judged of by the common style of thinking and speaking among the Romans of his own age. Thus, amidst the general decline, there must have been some in the Jewish church and nation whose minds retained and appreciated, more than others, the lingering beams of truth

and holiness. This, which we might have inferred from the known laws of human nature, we know to have been the fact from unquestionable history. There were, "in Jerusalem, righteous and pious persons, waiting for redemption, the consolation of Israel."* Of this class, it is surely not unreasonable to conclude that some, at least, of the authors and collectors of the Targums were: so that we might expect to find in their works some remains of the doctrines and the language of better times.

It is also to be observed that, in all instances of popular corruption of original truth, the mass of such popular opinion is very heterogeneous. Portions of truth, though inconsistent and ill cohering with the rest of the compound, are found mixed with errors and absurdities. This was the case with the ancient systems of polytheism, compared with the patriarchal religion; and it is the case with the intellectual and religious character of the populace, in Roman Catholic countries. This principle could not but operate upon the Jewish people, in the latter periods of their national existence; and it furnishes a solution, evidently just and natural, of the fact which might be otherwise unaccountable, the co-existence of inconsistent and opposite opinions on the person and operations of their expected Deliverer. That such inconsistent opinions did exist among them, the

* Luke ii. 25, 38.

gospel history in the New Testament contains intimations. It might, of course, be expected, that the earlier Rabbinical writings would partake of the same character.

From these two considerations, we should expect to find in the Targums the vestiges of purer knowledge and more correct interpretation, combined with other matter of an inferior kind. It ought not, therefore, to excite our surprize, if we should discover in those compositions doctrines about the Messiah which the general state of sentiment, at the particular period, would not have led us to expect. The writers *may* have intended to designate the Messiah under the appellations of **THE WORD** and **THE SHECHINAH**, while their notions laboured under much obscurity, and their application of those terms was often improper and inconsistent.

II. It is an idiom of the Chaldee language, to use the noun *Memra* as a substitute for an emphatic pronoun, in apposition with the noun or pronoun of a person *speaking*, or in any other way, *uttering* a command, promise, assent, or declaration. Some examples will illustrate this rule.

Targum* on Eccl. i. 2. “Solomon—said by *his word* [במימריה] Vanity of vanities is this world.”—

* This paraphrase is of little authority, being attributed to so late a period as the sixth century. See *Waltoni Proleg.* c. xii. § 15.

Targum of Onkelos on Gen. ix. 12, 13. “And Jah said, This is the sign of the covenant which I have given between *my word* and you,—it shall be for a sign of the covenant between *my word* and the earth.”—The same phrase is repeated in v. 15, 17. —בין מימרי דיי ובניכון: v. 16.—“between the *word* of Jah* and every living animal.” כל-נפשא חיה:

Id. on Exod. xxxi. 13, 17.—“It is a sign between *my word* and you:—between *my word* and the children of Israel.”

Jerusalem Targum on Exod. xix. 9. “The *word* of Jah said to Moses, Behold *my word* shall be revealed to thee in the thick cloud.”

Targum of Onkelos on Deut. i. 26. “Ye were rebellious against the *word* of Jah your God.” v. 32. “In this matter [פתגמת] ye were not faithful to the *word* of Jah your God.”

These instances, to which, were it necessary, many others might be added, are sufficient to prove and to illustrate the use of the phrase, as serving the purpose of an emphatical pronoun of the person speaking, or otherwise declaring his will;—*myself, the Lord himself, &c.*

III. It appears that, pursuing the common

* “strictly *Jeja*; but the Hebrew form *Jah* is preferred, being already naturalized in the authorized version of the Bible.

course of language, the word came to be used in the secondary sense; dropping the primary idea of speaking or any way uttering; that is, to denote a person's *self* simply.

Targum of Jonathan on Ruth iii. 8. “As Paltiel the son of Laish did, the righteous man who fixed a sword between *his word* and Michal the daughter of Saul.—” בין מימיה ובין מיכל :

Targum of Onkelos on Lev. xxvi. 46. “These are the covenants, and the judgments, and the laws, which Jah gave between *his word* and the sons of Israel.”

Id. on Exod. vi. 8.—“the land, of which I have sworn by *my word* to give it to Abraham, &c.”

Targum on Amos vi. 8. “The Lord God hath sworn by *his word*—.”

IV. It is well known that, from a period of very remote antiquity and probably before the Christian era, the Jews have held it unlawful to utter the *tetragrammaton** יהוה, the proper and most peculiar name of Deity, which Christians commonly pronounce JEHOVAH. In reading the Old Testament, the Jews substitute for the ineffable word, in some places *Elohim*, in others *Adonai*. The Rabbinical

* So denominated by Christians, as being composed of *four letters*. The Jews call it שם המפורש *the separated name*.

authors use either **שם** *The Name*, or the abbreviation* **קדש** *The Holy and Blessed Being*.

Now the Targumists never transfer this distinguished word into their paraphrases. They generally use for it, the term *Jah*. But, from the examination of many passages, it is evident that they also used, for the same purpose of periphrasis, the terms *The Word*, and *The Word of Jah*. It is also observable that the three expressions are used interchangeably, as synonyms, by the different Targumists.

Gen. v. 26. “Then, in his days, the sons of men profanely ceased from praying in the name of *Jah*.” Targ. Onk. “That was the generation in whose days they began to apostatize, and made to themselves falsehoods [*or* idols], and named their falsehoods by the name of the *word* of *Jah*. Targ. Jonath.

Exod. vi. 2, 3. “I am *Jah*: and I revealed [*myself*] to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, by *El-Shaddai* [*the God of omnipotence*]; but my name *Jah* I did not make known to them.” Targ. Onk. “I am *Jah*: and I revealed [*myself*] to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, by *El-Shaddai*; but yet my name *Jah*, in the displays of my glory, [*or*, the presence of my *Shechinah*,] I did not make known to them.” Targ. Jonath. “And *Jah* was revealed

* The words at length are **קדש בריך שם**

by *his word* to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, by the God of heaven; but the name of the *word* of Jah I did not make known to them." Targ. Jerusalem.

V. I have not been able to find a single instance in which the appellation is indubitably given to the Messiah;* but in one passage such an application is, by the terms, clearly impossible.

Targum of Jonathan on Is. xlii. 1. "Behold my servant the Messiah, I will draw near to him; my chosen, in whom *my word* hath delight."

Here the expression is plainly used for *myself*,†

* Instances which have been alleged are the following: but I cannot discover satisfactory evidence of their having this application.

Ps. cx. i. "Jah said, by *his word*, that he would place me as a ruler—" &c.

Is. xliii. 2. "—In ancient time, when ye passed through the red sea, *my word* was for your help."

Ib. xlv. 17. "Israel shall be delivered by the word of Jah, with an everlasting deliverance. v. 22. Look to *my word* and be ye delivered.—v. 23. By *my word* I have sworn,—v. 24. Truly by the word of Jah unto me he hath spoken, in order to bring forth righteousness and strength;—by *his word* they shall shew forth praise.—v. 25. By the word of Jah shall all the seed of Israel be declared righteous, and shall glory."

Hos. i. 7. "And upon the house of Judah I will have mercy, and I will deliver them by the word of Jah their God."

† Hebr. נַפְשִׁי *my soul*; an idiom for *myself*, in a strong and affectionate manner.

and is contradistinguished from the person of the Messiah.

VI. A few passages of the Old Testament have been adduced, as the original authority for this expression.* But, as I cannot discover unequivocal evidence that those passages employ the term *word* in any sense different from its proper meaning, *declaration, command, &c.* I do not perceive it necessary to offer any remarks upon them.

VII. The following appear to be the results of impartially examining this question.

1. That the primary import of the Chaldee expression is that, whatever it may be, which is the MEDIUM of communicating the mind and intentions of one person to another.

2. That it hence assumed the sense of a reciprocal pronoun.

3. That, when used in the latter sense, its most usual application is to the Divine Being; denoting, if we may use the expression, GOD, *his very self*; *Deus ipsissimus*; and is the synonym and substitute of the most exclusive of all the appellatives of Deity, the name JEHOVAH.

4. That there is no certain proof of its being

* 1 Sam. iii. 21. Ps. xxxiii. 6.

distinctly applied to the Messiah, in any of the Targums now extant.

5. That, from the mere use of the phrase, *The Memra of Jah*, or *The Word of the Lord*, in those Paraphrases, no certain information can be deduced on the doctrine of the Jews, in the interval between the Old Testament and the New, concerning the person of the Messiah.*

My apology for having dwelt so long on this topic is, that it has been made a ground of argument by many writers†, who have probably taken it from each other in succession, without the care of examination.

But, though such is our conclusion with regard to the Chaldee Paraphrases, it will not follow that the Jews of the same age, or a little after, did not employ the term *Word* with a personal reference, and that reference to the Messiah. The use of this term by Philo and by the Christian Evangelist John appears unaccountable, except on the supposition that it had grown up to the acceptance supposed, at least among the Jews who used the Greek language. Such an extension of meaning and reference, agreeably to the ordinary progress of language, would flow from the primary

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

† Particularly by *Allix*, in his *Judgment of the Ancient Jewish Church*; a work not remarkable for accurate statement or judicious reasoning.

signification, *a MEDIUM of rational communication*; and thus it would be a natural designation of a MEDIATOR between God and man. We have also another evidence which is intitled to the greater weight as it comes from a quarter the most hostile to the Christian religion. Celsus, whose words are recited by Origen, reproaches the Christians with absurdity and folly, for imagining that such a mean and contemned person as Jesus could be the PURE and HOLY WORD, the SON OF GOD; and personating a Jew, which is his manner in the construction of his work, he declares their belief that *the Word was the Son of God*, though they rejected the claims of Jesus to that honour. Origen, indeed, replies that, though he had conversed with many of the most learned Jews, he had not met with any who made use of that phrase. But, it is very conceivable that Celsus might have derived his information from some class of Jews with which Origen, notwithstanding his learning and industry, was unacquainted: and no reason can be imagined why the malignant and inveterate Celsus should have invented the statement, or that it could have come into his mind, if it was not true. It is not a fact which was likely to answer his purpose of running down Christianity. On the contrary, if more closely considered, its tendency appears favourable to the claims of Christianity, rather than the reverse.*

* See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. II.

Note [A] p. 409.

“ Upon the whole, then, how are we to determine the sense of this singular phrase in the Targumim? Although we consider it neither as a reciprocal, nor as intended to designate the second Person in the Trinity, who becoming incarnate lived and died for us (of which perhaps the Targumists themselves might have had at best but indistinct, or even incorrect ideas), yet may we most probably regard it in its general use, as indicative of a divine Person. That it properly means the *word of the Lord*, or his will declared by a verbal communication, and that it is sometimes literally so taken, cannot be denied. But it seems impossible to consult the numerous passages, where personal characteristics are attributed to it, and to conceive, that it does not usually point out a real person. Whether the Targumists contemplated this hypostatical word, as a true subsistence in the Divine nature, or as a distinct emanation of Deity, it may be useless to enquire, because we are deficient in data adequate to a complete decision of the question. If we suppose, that the doctrine of a Trinity was originally known to the Jews, and ever after religiously preserved among them, we shall be inclined to adopt the former opinion; but if, on the other hand, in the absence of direct proof, we think such a supposition improbable, we must embrace the latter. And in this case perhaps we may be disposed to identify the theology of the Targumists with that

of Philo the Alexandrian, and regard both as influenced by what is conceived to have been at the time the favourite philosophy of the East. *Philo*, like them, frequently alludes to the *Word of God*, λόγος Θεῶ, and we know that he every where ascribes to this *Word* personal powers and operations, and denominates him the *second God*, δεύτερος Θεός.—*Dr. Rich. Lawrence's Dissert. on the Logos*, p. 13, 14.

Note [B] p. 410.

Χριστιανοῖς ἐγκαλεῖ ὡς σοφίζομένοις ἐν τῇ λέγειν τὸν Ὑιὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι Ἀυτολόγον· καὶ ὀίεται γε κρατύνειν τὸ ἔγκλημα, ἐπεὶ, Λόγον ἐπαγγελλόμενοι Ὑιὸν εἶναι τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀποδείκνυμεν ὅν Λόγον καθαρὸν καὶ ἅγιον, ἀλλὰ ἄνθρωπον ἀτιμότατον, ἀπαχθέντα, καὶ ἀποτυμπανισθέντα.—Ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ πολλοῖς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ σοφοῖς γε ἐπαγγελλομένοις εἶναι συμβαλὼν, οὐδενὸς ἀκήκοα ἐπαινοῦντος τὸ, Λόγον εἶναι τὸν Ὑιὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὡς ὁ Κέλσος ἔφηκε· καὶ τοῦτο περιάπτων τῇ τοῦ Ἰουδαίου προσώπῳ λέγοντος, ὡς εἶγε ὁ Λόγος ἐστὶν ὑμῖν Ὑιὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐπαινοῦμεν. “He charges the Christians with being deceivers when they say that the Son of God is the Word Himself; and he conceives that he establishes his accusation in that, when we have announced the Word to be the Son of God, we exhibit, not a pure and holy Word, but a man in the lowest degree of meanness, dragged to punishment, and tortured to death.—I have had intercourse with many Jews, and those such as professed to be men of learning, but I have never heard of any one who admitted that the Son of God is the Word, as Celsus has affirmed; and this he attaches to the person of a Jew whom he represents as saying, *If your doctrine be that the Word is the Son of God, this we also admit.*” ORIGENIS Opera; ed. de la Rue, Par. 1733 1759. Tom. i. p. 413.

Celsus, the first and ablest literary opponent of the Christian religion, flourished within seventy or eighty years of the last surviving apostles. Brucker, in his *Hist. of Philos.* says that, while the extracts made by Origen prove Celsus to have been an inveterate enemy of Christianity, they shew that he was not destitute of learning and ability. We have reason to believe that Origen, in his reply, has preserved nearly the whole of his adversary's work, in his own words.

SECT. III.

ON THE WRITINGS OF THE ALEXANDRIAN JEWS, COMMONLY
CALLED THE APOCRYPHA.

MANY Jews were forcibly carried into Egypt, and others were induced to settle in that country, by Ptolemy the son of Lagus. They were chiefly settled at Alexandria, where the Macedonian Greek, with a large infusion of Hebrew and Chaldaic idioms, became their vernacular language, and was transferred to their religious services. To these Jews and their descendants we owe, not only the Version of the Old Testament called the Septuagint, but those various writings, moral, historical, and mythic, the collection of which is called the Apocrypha of the Old Testament. All of those books are curious, and some of them extremely valuable.* The earlier of them

* It is to be regretted that the just rejection of these books from the Scriptural Canon by the Reformed Churches, has occasioned the opposite extreme of an entire disregard to them in many serious and studious Christians. As a collection of the most ancient Jewish works next to the inspired books, as documents of history, as lessons of prudence and often of piety, and as elucidating the phraseology of the New Testament, the Greek Apocrypha well deserves the frequent perusal of scholars, and especially of theological students.

seem to have been compiled or translated from materials written within a century after the last of the inspired prophets,* and the latter of them, interpolations excepted, were probably composed some years before the birth of Christ.†

In reading these productions of the Alexandrine Jews, one cannot but remark the decline of religious intelligence, and the low point to which the knowledge and hope of a Messiah had sunk. They countenance incantations and other heathen superstitions; they speak of angels as intercessors with God for men; prayers and sacrifices for the souls of those who died in sin, they extol as “holy and pious;” and, so miserably lax had the current notions of morality become, that suicide and assassination are the subjects of encomium.‡ The term Messiah, or its translation Christ, does not even once occur, as a designation of the promised Saviour. The passages which have been adduced as intimations of belief or expectation with regard to him, contain, at the utmost, but very few and faint traces of any such reference. A per-

* See the Prologues of Jesus the son of Sirach.

† The 2d Book of Esdras (in the Roman Catholic enumeration, the 4th) is not included in this opinion. It is not extant in Greek, and was probably written after the commencement of Christianity. The two apocryphal books of Esdras, and the Prayer of Manasseh, are rejected from the canon by the church of Rome.

‡ Tob. iii. 8. vi. 16. xii. 15. 2 Macc. xii. 40—46. xiv. 41, 42. Judith ix. 2—4.

sonification of sacred wisdom occurs,* which some have been willing to accept as a description of "Christ, the Wisdom of God:" but if the far more strong and beautiful picture of the same kind in the genuine Book of Proverbs,† cannot be satisfactorily proved to be a designed description of the Saviour's person, much less can such an interpretation be established on the apocryphal imitation. In two or three places, the *word* of God is mentioned, in a way on which stress has been laid:‡ but I cannot discover evidence that it signifies any thing more than, either the divine command, or God himself according to the Chaldaic usage before stated. The appearances and revelations which the earlier records of the Old Testament attribute to the Angel of Jehovah, are thus referred to; "God—appeared upon earth, and was conversant with men:"§ and in their

* Wisd. Sol. ch. vii.—xi.

† Ch. viii. ix.

‡ Wisd. Sol. ix. 1. xvi. 12, 26. xviii. 15. The last passage has the most of a personal appearance. "When still silence embraced all things, and night in its own speed had reached its midway, thine all-powerful word, from heaven out of royal thrones, leaped, a fierce warrior into the midst of the land of destruction, bearing a sharp sword, thine undissembled commandment; and standing up it filled all things with death; and whilst it touched heaven, it stalked upon earth." This laboured bombast appears to be an injudicious imitation of passages in the Greek Poets. (Not improbably a passage in *Callimachus's Hymn to Ceres*, v. 30—59, which the scholiast says was written for the Eleusinian festival instituted at Alexandria by Ptolemy Philadelphus.) But surely none will attribute to the Messiah to have been the agent of destruction in the land of Egypt.

§ Bar. iii. 35—37.

present calamities, the Jews are assured as from God, "Mine Angel is with you, even himself seeking out your souls."* In the same book, "the Eternal Saviour" is represented as the object of prayer and trust:† but the passage merely respects the sufferings of the Jews in the Babylonish captivity. Simon Maccabæus was confirmed in the pontificate, "until a faithful prophet should arise;"‡ not improbably referring to the great Prophet foretold by Moses. In the prayer of the son of Sirach, there is a passage which, if the reading be genuine, it seems impossible not to admit as a recognition of the Messiah as the Son of God: "I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord."§

* Bar. vi. 7. apparently alluding to Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12.

† Bar. iv. 20—24. ‡ 1 Macc. xiv. 41. Bef. C. 143.

§ Wisd. of Jes. li. 14. and so reads the Vulg. but the Syr. and Arab. Versions have, "I called upon my Father from on high, (*Arab.* from heaven.)"

SECT. IV.

ON THE DOCTRINES OF PHILO, CONCERNING THE LOGOS.

PHILO was a Jew of Alexandria, of a sacerdotal family, eminent above his contemporaries for talents, eloquence, and wisdom; and whose learning it is not probable that any of his nation, in any subsequent period, if we except Josephus, have exceeded or even approached. From the most probable estimation he was about sixty years old at the time of the death of Jesus Christ; and he lived for some years afterwards. But we have no reason to think that he ever visited Judea, or that he was acquainted with the important events which were there taking place. The gospel was not extensively and openly communicated out of Judea till ten years after our Lord's crucifixion. It cannot, then, be reasonably supposed that this distinguished person was a convert to Christianity: at least, it is next to impossible to conceive that a Christian of such character, dignity, and authority as he would have been, and who, on the supposition of his being a Christian, must have been perfectly known and highly esteemed by some, at least, of the New Testament writers, should not

be in any manner mentioned or alluded to by those writers. The coincidences of sentiment, and more frequently of phraseology, which occur in the writings of Philo, with the language of Paul and of John in the New Testament, must be accounted for on some other principles. Yet it would be contrary to all the philosophy of human nature, not to ascribe these different but similar streams to one primary source. That source, I venture to propose, is not to be sought in the writings of Plato, or in the ethical lectures of the learned Jews of Alexandria, or in the sole speculations and invented diction of Philo himself;—but in the SACRED WRITINGS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, transfused into the Alexandrian idiom, and paraphrased and amplified in the terms and phrases which were vernacular to the Grecian Jews. Since the New Testament was written in this idiom, and since the component parts of the Christian dispensation were not so much new ideas as the fuller explication, and the more interesting impression, of truths and promises previously revealed;* the conformity of which we are treating appears less an object of just surprize than its absence would have been.

But no part of the writings of Philo has excited

* “Saying nothing beyond the things which the prophets and Moses spoke of as what should come to pass.” Acts xxvi. 22. “The righteousness [*δικαιοσύνη*, method of justification,] of God is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.” Rom. iii. 21.

so much attention and admiration as his frequent expressions on the subject of the Logos, or *Word*. He has been thought to ascribe to this mysterious object, Personality, Divine Perfections, a Gracious Commission from heaven, the Bestowment of the highest blessings on mankind ; in fine, that, under the title of the *Word*, the attributes of the Messiah were designedly portrayed. Hence some have taken up the opinion that Philo was a Christian ;* and others, that, being only a Jew, he furnishes the most authentic statement of the belief and the expectations entertained by the most pious and the best informed of his nation, with regard to the hope and redemption of Israel.

To ascertain satisfactorily what was the doctrine of Philo concerning the Word, it appears necessary to collect the principal passages† which his extant writings furnish on the subject.

* See Note [A] at the end of this Section.

† Though in translating the following extracts I have endeavoured to convey the closest representation of the meaning and spirit, and as much as possible of the very words, of the author, it has seemed necessary to the satisfaction of a numerous and happily increasing class of readers, to annex the original passages. To one who can read them it will be manifest that no translation can convey a just idea of the remarkable phraseology of Philo, or of the frequent and extraordinary coincidence of his language with that of the New Testament. Had the passages been merely referred to, very few could have enjoyed this pleasure and advantage ; on account of the scarcity of the only eligible editions of Philo, that of *Mangey*, 2 vols. folio, *Lond.* 1742, and that by *Aug. Fred. Pfeiffer*, 5 vols. 8vo. *Erlangen*, 1785.

“ *Behold the man whose name is the Branch, (or, the Rising Light.)* [Zech. iii. 8.] Truly a very unusual appellation, if you regard it as referring to a being consisting of a body and a soul; but if it be admitted to refer to that incorporeal person who shares the divine image, you will acknowledge that the name of the *Rising Light* is most apposite to him. For him the Father of the universe hath caused to spring up as his Eldest Son, whom he also names the First-begotten, and who, when begotten, imitating the proceedings of his Father, formed species of beings, looking at the Father’s archetypal models.”*

“ God, as a Shepherd and King, according to equity and law, directs his agency, as upon a flock, on earth and water, air and fire, and all things contained therein, both vegetable and animal, both mortal and divine; and also the constitution of the heavens, the periods of the sun and moon, and the revolutions and harmonious movements of the other stars; placing over them his own perfect Word, his First-begotten Son, who, as the deputy of a mighty sovereign, receives the charge

* Ἴδου ἄνθρωπος ᾧ ὄνομα Ἀνατολή. Καινοτάτη γε πρόσρησις, εἰ μὲν γε τὸν ἐκ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς συνεστῶτα λέγεσθαι νομίσης· εἰ δὲ τὸν ἀσώματον ἐκείνον, θείας ἀδιαφοροῦντα εἰκόνας, ὁμολογήσεις ὅτι ἐνθυβολώτατον ὄνομα ἐπιφημίσθη τὸ Ἀνατολῆς αὐτῷ. Τοῦτον μὲν γὰρ πρεσβύτατον Ὑιὸν ὃ τῶν ὄντων ἀνέτειλε Πατήρ, ὃν ἐτέρωθι Πρωτόγονον ὠνόμασε, καὶ ὃ γεννηθεὶς μέντοι μιμούμενος τὰς τοῦ Πατρὸς ὁδοὺς, πρὸς παραδείγματα ἀρχέτυπα ἐκείνου βλέπων, ἐμόρφον εἶδη. *Opera, ed. Mangeii, tom. i. p. 414.*

of presiding over this sacred company. For it is said, *Behold, I AM: I will send mine angel before thy face to keep thee in the way.*"*

"It is proper for persons who form themselves into a society for the advancement of knowledge, to long to behold the Supreme Being; and, since that is impossible, his *Image*, the most sacred *WORD*; and, next to him, the most perfect work of objects of sense, this universe."†

"Though a mortal may not as yet be deemed worthy to be styled a son of God, yet let him labour to copy the excellencies of his First-begotten Word, the eldest Angel, who exists as the Archangel of many titles; for he is styled the Beginning, the Name of God, the *WORD*, he who is in likeness a man, and the Inspector of Israel.— If we are not yet deemed adequate to be reckoned children of God, yet we may be of his Eternal

* Καθάπερ γὰρ τινα ποιμνην, γῆν καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ ἀέρα καὶ πῦρ, καὶ ὅσα ἐν τούτοις φυτὰ τε αὐ καὶ ζῶα, τὰ μὲν θνητὰ, τὰ δὲ θεῖα· ἔτι δὲ οὐρανοῦ φύσιν, καὶ ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης περιόδους, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀστέρων τροπὰς τε αὐ καὶ χορείας ἐναρμονίους, ὡς ποιμῆν καὶ βασιλεὺς ὁ Θεὸς ἄγει κατὰ δίκην καὶ νόμον, προστησάμενος τὸν ὀρθὸν αὐτοῦ Λόγον, πρωτόγονον Ὑιὸν, ὃς τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν τῆς ἱερᾶς ταύτης ἀγέλης, ὅια τις μεγάλου βασιλέως ὑπαρχος διαδέξεται. Καὶ γὰρ εἴρηται πον· Ἴδού ἐγὼ εἰμι· ἀποστελῶ ἄγγελόν μου εἰς πρόσωπόν σου, τοῦ φυλάξαι σε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ. Tom. i. p. 308.

† Ἐμπρεπὲς γὰρ τοῖς ἐταιφίαν πρὸς ἐπιστήμην θεμένοις, ἐφίεσθαι μὲν τοῦ τὸ ὄΝ ἰδεῖν· εἰ δὲ μὴ δύναιτο, τὴν γοῦν Ἐκόνα αὐτοῦ, τὸν ἱερώτατον Λόγον, μεθ' ὃν καὶ τὸ ἐν αἰσθητῇς τελειότατον ἔργον, τὸνδε τὸν κόσμον. Tom. i. p. 419.

Image, the most sacred WORD; for that eldest WORD is the Image of God.”*

“ Be not surprized that the faculty of speech in man is called the habitation of the mind ; for God the Supreme Mind hath his own WORD for his habitation.”†

“—— The WORD, elder than any thing that has been brought into existence, by which as a rudder the Ruler of the universe directs all things ; and, when he formed the world, used it as an instrument for the perfect composition of his finished works.”‡

“ The shadow of God is his WORD, which as an instrument he has made use of in the formation of the world : and this shadow, and as it were copied

* Κᾶν μηδέπω μέντοι τυγχάνη τις ἀξιόχρεως ὦν υἱὸς Θεοῦ προσαγορεύεσθαι, σπουδαζέτω κοσμεῖσθαι κατὰ τὸν πρωτόγονον αὐτοῦ Λόγον, τὸν ἄγγελον πρεσβύτατον, ὡς ἀρχάγγελον πολυώνυμον ὑπάρχοντα· καὶ γὰρ ἀρχή, καὶ ὄνομα Θεοῦ, καὶ Λογος, καὶ ὁ κατ’ εἰκόνα ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ὁρῶν Ἰσραὴλ, προσαγορεύεται.—Καὶ γὰρ εἰ μήπω ἱκανοὶ Θεοῦ παῖδες νομίζεσθαι γεγόναμεν, ἀλλὰ τοι τῆς αἰδίου εἰκόνης αὐτοῦ Λόγου τοῦ ἱερωτάτου Θεοῦ γὰρ εἰκὼν Λόγος ὁ πρεσβύτατος. Tom. i. p. 427.

† Μὴ θαυμάσης δὲ εἰ νοῦ τὸν λόγον ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ κέκληκεν οἶκον· καὶ γὰρ τὸν τῶν ὅλων νοῦν τὸν Θεόν, οἶκον ἔχειν φησὶ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ Λόγον. Tom. i. p. 437.

‡ — ὁ Λόγος ὁ πρεσβύτερος τῶν γένεσιν ἐληφότων, οὗ καθάπερ οἶακος ἐνείλημμένος ὁ τῶν ὅλων κυβερνήτης πηδαλιουχεῖ τὰ σύμπαντα· καὶ, ὅτε ἐκοσμοπλάσσει, χρησάμενος ὀργάνῳ τούτῳ πρὸς τὴν ἀνυπαίτιον τῶν ἀποτελουμένων σύστασιν, Ib.

image is the archetype of other things :—so that, the image having been copied from God, human nature was copied from the image empowered to be the model.”*

“ — God, the Fountain of the Eldest Word.”†

“ Do not pass over the expression, [Gen. xxxi. 13. according to the Septuagint; *I am the God who appeared to thee in the place of God.*] but examine accurately whether there are in fact two gods: for the words are, *I am the God who appeared to thee*, not *in mine own place*, but *in the place of God*, as if of another. What then must we say? He who is God in reality is *one*; but those who may be so called in an inferior sense, are many. Wherefore also the sacred word in this passage designates him who is God in reality by the article, saying, *I am THE God* (ὁ Θεός): but him who is so denominated by the inferior application, it designates without the article; saying, *who appeared to thee in the place of God*, not τοῦ Θεοῦ, but only Θεοῦ. But now he calls his Eldest Word, *the God* [τὸν Θεόν, with the article,] not being superstitiously anxious about the imposition of names,

* Σκιά Θεοῦ δὲ ὁ Λόγος αὐτοῦ ἐστίν, ᾧ καθάπερ ὄργανῳ προσ-
 χρησάμενος ἐκοσμοπόιει· αὕτη δὲ ἡ σκιά καὶ τὸ ὡσανεὶ ἀπεικόνισμα,
 ἑτέρων ἐστὶν ἀρχέτυπον.—ὡς τῆς μὲν εἰκόνος κατὰ τὸν Θεόν
 ἀπεικονισθείσης, τοῦ δὲ ἀνθρώπου κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα, λαβοῦσα
 δύναμιν παραδείγματος. Tom. i. p. 106.

† — ὁ Θεός, ἡ τοῦ πρεσβυτάτου Λόγου πηγὴ. Ib. p. 207.

but proposing the sole end of declaring the thing as it really is.*

“ Moreover, why should we be surprized that God assumes the likeness of angels, since he has assumed that of men, for the succour of those that pray to him? So that, when he says, *I am the God who have appeared to thee, in the place of God*, it is to be understood that he took the place of an angel, transforming himself so far as appearances went, for the help of one who could not yet behold the real God. For as men who cannot behold the sun itself, look at its reflected brightness, as the sun; and the changes of the moon, as the moon itself; so likewise they consider the Image of God, his Angel, the WORD, as himself.— He saith, *I am the Lord thy God*, whose Image thou didst before behold as myself, and didst set up a pillar engraving upon it a most holy inscription. That inscription signified, ‘ I alone am unchangeable, and give its stability to universal

* Μὴ παρέλθῃς δὲ τὸ ἐξημέρον, ἀλλ’ ἀκριβῶς ἐξέτασον, εἰ τῷ ὄντι δύο εἰσὶ θεοί· λέγεται γὰρ, Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ὀφθείς σοι, οὐκ ἐν τόπῳ τῷ ἐμῷ, ἀλλ’ ἐν τόπῳ Θεοῦ, ὡς ἂν ἐτέρου. Τί οὖν χρὴ λέγειν; Ὁ μὲν ἀληθεὶς Θεὸς εἷς ἐστίν· οἱ δ’ ἐν καταχρήσει λεγόμενοι, πλείους. Διὸ καὶ ὁ ἱερὸς λόγος, ἐν τῷ παρόντι, τὸν μὲν ἀληθεῖα, διὰ τοῦ ἄρθρου μεμήνυκεν, εἰπὼν, Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ Θεός, τὸν δ’ ἐν καταχρήσει χωρὶς ἄρθρου· φάσκων, Ὁ ὀφθείς σοι ἐν τόπῳ, οὐ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλ’ ἀντὶ μόνον, Θεοῦ. Καλεῖ δὲ τὸν Θεὸν τὸν πρεσβύτατον αὐτοῦ νυνὶ Λόγον, ὃν δεισιδαιμονῶν περὶ τὴν θέσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων, ἀλλ’ ἐν τέλος προστεθειμένος πραγματολογῆσαι. Ib. p. 655. See Note [B] at the end of this Section.

✓ nature; out of disorder and deformity bringing regularity and beauty; and supporting the universe, that it may be firmly established, by the mighty WORD which ruleth under me.'”*

“ — Much more observance is due to the immortal soul, which, the scriptures say, was moulded according to the image of the Infinite Being. But the Image of God is the WORD, through whom the universe was created.”†

“ The illustrious Moses has compared the form of the rational soul to no created being, but has said that it is the genuine impression of that Divine and Pure Spirit, stamped and moulded by

* Τί οὖν ἔτι θαυμάζομεν, εἰ ἀγγέλοις ὁπότε καὶ ἀνθρώποις, ἕνεκα τῆς τῶν δεομένων ἐπικουρίας ἀπεικάζεται; Ὡς τε ὅταν φῇ, Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ὀφθεῖς σοι ἐν τόπῳ Θεοῦ· τοῦτ' ἐννοητέον, ὅτι τὸν ἀγγέλου τόπον ἐπέσχε, ὅσα τῷ δοκεῖν οὖν [conj. ἐαυτὸν, lapsu orto compendio εἶον] μεταβαλὼν, πρὸς τὴν τοῦ μήπω δυναμένου τὸν ἀληθῆ Θεὸν ἰδεῖν, ὠφέλειαν. Καθάπερ γὰρ τὴν ἀνθήλιον ἀυγὴν, ὥς ἥλιον, οἱ μὴ δυνάμενοι τὸν ἥλιον αὐτὸν ἰδεῖν, ὁρῶσι, καὶ τὰς περὶ σελήνην ἀλλοιώσεις, ὥς αὐτὴν ἐκείνην· οὕτως καὶ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰκόνα τὸν ἀγγελὸν αὐτοῦ Λόγον, ὥς αὐτὸν, κατανοοῦσι.— Ἄυτὸς φησὶν· Ἐγὼ εἰμι Κύριος ὁ Θεός, ὃν τὴν εἰκόνα ὥς ἐμὲ πρότερον ἐθεάσω, καὶ στήλην ἐπίγραμμα ἐγκολάψας ἱερώτατον ἀνέθηκας· τὸ δ' ἐπίγραμμα ἐμήνυεν, ὅτι μόνος ἔστηκα ἐγὼ, καὶ τὴν πάντων φύσιν ἰδρυσάμην, τὴν ἀταξίαν καὶ ἀκοσμίαν εἰς τάξιν καὶ κόσμον ἀγαγὼν, καὶ τὸ πᾶν ὑπερείσας, ἵνα στηρίχθῃ βεβαίως τῷ κραταιῷ καὶ ὑπάρχῳ μου Λόγῳ. Ib. p. 656.

† — Ἐπισκεπτέον — πολὺ πλεον ψυχὴν τὴν ἀθάνατον, ἣν φασὶ τυπωθῆναι κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ὄντος· Λόγος δὲ ἐστὶν εἰκὼν Θεοῦ, δι' ὃν σύμπας ὁ κόσμος ἐδημιουργεῖτο. Tom. ii. p. 225.

the seal of God, of which the Eternal Word is the Express Image.”*

“To the production of any object many things must concur; the by what, the of what, the through what, the for what. The *by what* is the cause; the *of what*, the matter; the *through what*, the tool; the *for what*, the reason.—Behold—this universe! You will find its Cause, God, by whom it has come into existence; its matter, the four elements, of which it is composed; its Instrument, the Word of God, through whom it was arranged; and the reason of the arrangement, the goodness of the Creator.”†

Allegorizing the six cities of refuge, as he does all the history of the Hebrews and every part of the Mosaic institutes, Philo assigns a moral signification to each city.—“Is not the eldest, and strongest, and best, not city merely, but metropo-

* Ὁ δὲ δὴ μέγας Μωϋσῆς οὐδενὶ τῶν γεγονότων τῆς λογικῆς ψυχῆς τὸ εἶδος ὁμοίωσεν· ἀλλ’ εἶπεν αὐτὴν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἀκηράτου πνεύματος ἐκείνου δόκιμον εἶναι νόμισμα, σημειωθὲν καὶ τυπωθὲν σφραγίδι Θεοῦ, ἧς ὁ χαρακτήρ ἐστὶν ὁ αἰδῖος Λόγος. Tom. ii. p. 606; ex emendatione Mangeii.

† Πρὸς τὴν τινος γένεσιν πολλὰ δεῖ συνελθεῖν· τὸ ὑφ’ οὗ, τὸ ἐξ οὗ, τὸ δι’ οὗ, τὸ-δι’ οὗ. Καὶ ἐστὶ μὲν τὸ ὑφ’ οὗ, τὸ αἰτιον· ἐξ οὗ δὲ, ἡ ὕλη· δι’ οὗ δὲ, τὸ ἐργαλεῖον. δι’ οὗ δὲ, ἡ αἰτία.—Ἴδε τὸνδε τὸν κόσμον· εὐρήσεις γὰρ αἰτιον μὲν αὐτοῦ, τὸν Θεόν, ὑφ’ οὗ γέγονεν· ὕλην δὲ, τὰ τέσσαρα στοιχεῖα ἐξ ὧν συνεκράθη· ὄργανον δὲ, Λόγον Θεοῦ, δι’ οὗ κατεσκευάσθη· τῆς δὲ κατασκευῆς αἰτίαν, τὴν ἀγαθοτητα τοῦ Δημιουργοῦ. Tom. i. p. 162.

lis, the Divine Word, to which as the chief it is most profitable to flee for refuge? And the other five, as cities peopled from it, are the powers of Him that speaketh: of these the principal is the Creative Power, according to which the Creator made the world by a word.—The image of a Propitiatory Power, is the covering of the ark; and he calls it the Propitiatory: the images of the Creative and Royal Powers, are the Cherubim, winged and placed over the ark. But he who is over these, the Divine Word, comes not into a visible form, nor is capable of being brought among things known by sense; but exists as the Image of God, the eldest of all possible objects of knowledge, fixed the nearest, there being no intervening existence, to the Only One who is Self-Existent.—Three cities were beyond the river:—What are they? The Word of the Sovereign, and his Creative and Royal Power.”*

* Μήποτ' οὖν ἡ μὲν πρεσβυτάτη καὶ ὀχυρωτάτη καὶ ἀρίστη μητρόπολις, οὐκ αὐτὸ μόνον πόλις, ὁ Θεῖός ἐστι Λόγος, ἐφ' ὃν πρῶτον καταφεύγειν ὠφελιμώτατον; Ἄι δ' ἄλλαι πέντε, ὡς ἂν ἀποικίαι, δυνάμεις εἰσὶ τοῦ Λέγοντος, ὧν ἀρχει ἡ ποιητικὴ, καθ' ἣν ὁ ποιῶν λόγῳ τὸν κόσμον ἐδημιούργησε.—Τῆς δ' Ἰλεω δυνάμεως, τὸ ἐπίθεμα τῆς κιβωτοῦ· καλεῖ δ' αὐτὸ ἱλαστήριον· ποιητικῆς δὲ καὶ βασιλικῆς, τὰ ὑπόπτερα καὶ ἐφιδρυμένα Χερουβίμ· ὁ δ' ὑπεράνω τούτων Λόγος θεῖος εἰς ὁρατὴν οὐκ ἦλθεν ἰδέαν, ἅτε μηδενὶ τῶν κατ' αἰσθησὶν ἐμφορῆς ὧν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς εἰκὼν ὑπάρχων Θεοῦ, τῶν νοητῶν ἀπαξαπάντων ὁ πρεσβύτατος, ὁ ἐγγυτάτω, μηδενὸς ὄντος μεθορίου διαστήματος, τοῦ μόνου δ' ἐστὶν ἀψευδῶς, ἀφιδρυμένος.—Τρεῖς μὲν εἰσι πέραν.—τίνες αὗται; ὁ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος Λόγος, καὶ ἡ ποιητικὴ καὶ βασιλικὴ δύναμις αὐτοῦ. Tom. i. 560, 561.

This extraordinary writer not only invents a moral allegory for the plainest historical facts⁹, but he occasionally intimates a disbelief of them as matters of fact. Speaking of the Levitical high-priest, he says: "I consider the high-priest to be not a man, but the Divine Word, who is perfectly free from sin involuntary as well as voluntary. Moses further says that *he is not to defile himself for his father, the mind, nor for his mother* [Lev. xxi. 11.], the sensitive faculty: for this reason, I conceive, that it is his prerogative to have parents incorruptible and perfectly pure; his father, God, who is the father of all; his mother, Wisdom, through which all things came into existence.—This eldest Word of the Supreme Essence clothes himself with the universe, as with a garment.—This Word of the Supreme Essence is the bond of the universe, which contains and clasps together all its component parts."*

"Why, as of some other God, does he say, *In the image of God he made man*; and not, *in his own image*? Here appears the consummate wisdom

* Λέγομεν γὰρ τὸν ἀρχιερέα οὐκ ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ Λόγον θεῖον εἶναι, πάντων οὐχ ἑκουσίῳ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀκουσίῳ ἀδικημάτων ἀμέτοχον. "Ουτε γὰρ ἐπὶ πατρὶ, τῷ νῷ, οὔτε ἐπὶ μητρὶ, τῇ αἰσθήσει, φησὶν αὐτὸν Μωϋσῆς δύνασθαι μαινέσθαι· διότι, οἶμαι, γονέων ἀφθάρτων καὶ καθαρωτάτων ἔλαχεν, πατὴρ μὲν Θεοῦ, ὃς καὶ τῶν συμπάντων ἐστὶ πατήρ, μητὴρ δὲ σοφίας, δι' ἧς τὰ ὅλα ἦλθεν εἰς γένεσιν.—Ἐνδύεται δ' ὁ μὲν πρεσβύτατος τοῦ ὄντος Λόγος, ὡς ἐσθῆτα, τὸν κόσμον.—Ὁ τε γὰρ τοῦ ὄντος Λόγος, δέσμος ὢν τῶν ἀπάντων,—καὶ συνέχει τὰ μέρη πάντα καὶ σφίγγει. Tom. i. p. 562.

of inspiration. For no mortal thing could be made after the likeness of HIM who is Supreme and Father of all, but only after that of the Second God, who is HIS *Word*. For it was necessary that the rational faculty in the human soul should be stamped by the impression of the Divine WORD; since God who is before the WORD is superior to all [other] rational nature, and it would have been utterly unlawful for any begotten being to be made like to Him who is above the WORD and who occupies the form of existence which is the noblest and distinct from any other.*

Enumerating several particulars in which the manna in the desert is conceived to be figurative of the *Logos*, Philo says; "Thus also the Divine WORD is most piercing of sight, so as to be adequate to the beholding of all things.—What can be brighter or more extensively shining than the Divine WORD, according to their participation of which all other things which long to partake of the light of the soul, banish their mist and darkness?—Manna is the most productive of any [material]

* Διὰ τί, ὡς περὶ ἑτέρου Θεοῦ, φησι τὸ, Ἐν εἰκόνι Θεοῦ ἐποίησε τὸν ἄνθρωπον· ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τῇ ἑαυτοῦ; Παγκάλως καὶ σοφῶς τουτὶ κεχρησμέθηται. Θνητὸν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἀπεικονισθῆναι πρὸς τὸν ἀνωτάτω καὶ Πατέρα τῶν ὄλων ἐδύνατο, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸν δεύτερον Θεόν, ὃς ἐστὶν ἐκείνου Λόγος. Ἔδει γὰρ τὸν λογικὸν ἐν ἀνθρώπου ψυχῇ τύπον ὑπὸ θείου Λόγου χαραχθῆναι· ἐπειδὴ ὁ πρὸ τοῦ Λόγου Θεὸς κρείσσων ἐστὶν ἢ πᾶσα λογικὴ φύσις· τῷ δὲ ὑπὲρ τὸν Λόγον, ἐν τῇ βελτίστη καὶ τινὶ ἐξαιρέτῳ καθεστῶτι ιδέῃ, οὐδὲν θέμις ἦν γεννητὸν ἐξομοιοῦσθαι. Tom. ii. p. 625. *Fragm. adserv. ap. Eusebii Præp. Evang. Lib. vii. Cap. 13.*

thing: and the Word of God is superior to the whole world, and is the eldest and most productive of all things that exist.*

But, in another place, the same expression and the same figure are used to denote, as it appears, merely a divine doctrine or communication: “Seeking what that is which nourishes the soul, (for, as Moses says, they knew not what it was), they have found it by learning that it is the *declaration* of God and his *divine word*, from which all instruction and wisdom ever-flowing stream. This is the heavenly nutriment.”—†

* “Οὕτω καὶ ὁ θεῖος Λόγος ὀξυδερκέστατός ἐστιν, ὥς πάντα ἐφορᾶν εἶναι ἱκανός.—Τί γὰρ ἂν εἴη λαμπρότερον ἢ τηλαυγέστερον θεῖου Λόγου, οὐ κατὰ μετουσίαν καὶ τὰ ἄλλα τὴν ἀχλὺν καὶ τὸν ζόφον ἀπελαύνει, φωτὸς κοινωνῆσαι ψυχικοῦ γλιχόμενα;—Τὸ γὰρ μάγμα—τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ γενικώτατον τῶν ὄντων· καὶ ὁ Λόγος δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑπεράνω παντός ἐστι τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ πρεσβύτατος καὶ γενικώτατος τῶν ὅσα γέγονε. Tom. i. p. 121. With some hesitation I have translated γενικός by the term *productive*. It is used by Greek writers to signify that which is *generic*,—*universal*,—*the head and most comprehensive of a class*,—*the author or producer of inferior orders*,—*the possessive case in grammar*, as denoting *origination*. Another passage may assist to ascertain Philo’s sense in his use of this word: τὸ δὲ γενικώτατόν ἐστιν ὁ Θεός, καὶ δεύτερος ὁ Θεοῦ Λόγος. “The most generic [*or productive, or &c.*] being is God, and the Word of God is second.” Tom. i. p. 82. Paulus of Jena considers καὶ δεύτερος as the attributive of ὁ Θεός, giving this sense, “—is God, even he who is the second, the Word of God.” See *H. E. G. Pauli Capita Selectiora Introd. N. Test.* p. 88.

† Ζητήσαντες καὶ τί τὸ τρέφον ἐστὶ τὴν ψυχὴν· (οὐ γὰρ, ἢ φησι Μωσῆς, ἤδεισαν τί ἦν·) εὗρον μαθόντες ῥῆμα Θεοῦ καὶ λόγον θεῖον, ἀφ’ οὗ πᾶσαι παιδεῖαι καὶ σοφαὶ ῥέουσιν ἀένναοι. “Ἢδ’ ἐστὶν ἡ οὐράνιος τροφή. Ib. p. 566.

“—— Further ; that heavenly food of the soul, which he calls manna, the Divine Word impartially distributes to those who will rightly use it, and he is eminently careful to do this with equality.”*

“—— Hagar fled away, from modest shame ; as it is evinced by an angel's meeting her, the Divine Word, to advise what she should do, and to conduct her back to her mistress's house.”†

“The world is created ; and certainly it is so from some First Cause. Now the Word of the Creator is itself the seal from which each created being has received its form ; and in relation to whom, its own complete species from the beginning constantly adheres to every creature, as being the impression and image of the Perfect Word.—The quality of each remains the same, as having been impressed from the Divine Word which abideth and is in no respect altered.”‡

* "Ἐπὶ τοίνυν τὴν οὐράνιον τροφήν ψυχῆς, ἣν καλεῖ μάννα, διανέμει πᾶσι τοῖς χρησομένοις Λόγος θεῖος ἐξ ἴσου, πεφροντικῶς διαφερόντως ἰσότητος. Tom. i. p. 499.

† Ἡ δ' Ἀγαρ ἀπαλλάττεται δι' αἰδῶ· σημεῖον δὲ, τὸ ὑπαντᾶν αὐτῇ ἄγγελον, θεῖον Λόγον, ὃ χρηὶ παραινέσοντα, καὶ ὑφηγησόμενον ἐπανόδου τῆς εἰς τὸν δεσποίνης οἶκον. Ib. p. 547.

‡ Γεγέννηται γὰρ ὁ κόσμος, καὶ πάντως ὑπ' αἰτίου τινος γέγονεν· ὃ δὲ τοῦ Ποιῦντος Λόγος αὐτός ἐστιν ἡ σφραγὶς, ἥ τῶν ὄντων ἕκαστον μεμόρφωται· παρ' ὃν καὶ τέλειον τοῖς γενομένοις ἐξ ἀρχῆς παρακολουθεῖ τὸ εἶδος, ὥστε ἐκμαγεῖον καὶ εἰκὼν τελείου Λόγου.—Μένει ἡ αὐτὴ ποιότης, ὥστε ἀπὸ μένοντος ἐκμαχθεῖσα καὶ μηδαμῇ τρεπομένου θεῖου Λόγου. Ib.

“The WORD of God when he visits our earthly world, defends and helps those who love and follow virtue, so as to provide for them a refuge and a complete salvation: but on the enemies [of virtue] he sends destruction and remediless ruin.”*

“So also the WORD of God waters the virtues, for it is the beginning and fountain of good works.—There are four cardinal virtues, prudence, fortitude, moderation, and justice.—These as from one root spring up from the Divine WORD, which he [Moses, referring to Gen. ii. 10.] compares to a river, because of its ever-streaming and continual production of principles [λόγων] and doctrines, with which it nourishes the souls that love God, and makes them grow.”†

“The Divine WORD, which many call fortune, turns round [the revolutions of nations and empires.]—The Divine WORD endeavours, by all means, to stop up the path of grovelling vice and

* Ὁ γὰρ τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγος, ὅταν ἐπὶ τὸ γεῶδες ἡμῶν σύστημα ἀφίκηται, τοῖς μὲν ἀρετῆς συγγενέσι καὶ πρὸς ἀρετὴν ἀποκλίνουσιν ἀρήγει καὶ βοηθεῖ, ὥς καταφυγὴν καὶ σωτηρίαν αὐτοῖς πορίζει παντελῇ· τοῖς δὲ ἀντικαλοῖς ὄλεθρον καὶ φθορὰν ἀνίατον ἐπιπέμπει. Ib. p. 633.

† Ὅντως μέντοι καὶ ὁ Θεοῦ Λόγος ποτίζει τὰς ἀρετὰς· ἀρχὴ γὰρ καὶ πηγὴ καλῶν πράξεων οὗτος. —γενικαὶ μὲν γάρ εἰσιν ἀρεταὶ τέσσαρες, φρόνησις, ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη.—αὗται δὲ καθάπερ ἐκ μιᾶς ῥίζης ἐκπεφύκασιν τοῦ θεῖου Λόγου, ὃν εἰκάζει ποταμῷ, διὰ τὴν ἀένναον καὶ συνεχῇ φορὰν ποτίμων λόγων, καὶ δογμάτων, οἷς τὰς φιλοθέους τρέφει καὶ συναύξει ψυχὰς. Ib. p. 250.

of those who are infected by it.—The WORD is the Divine Angel, who guides our feet and removes the stumbling-blocks, that we may walk without falling in this highway.”*

The high-priest's breast-plate of gold and jewels is interpreted by Philo to be “the expression of the WORD who contains and directs the universe : for it was necessary that he who officiated as priest to the Father of the world should employ as his Intercessor the SON, most perfect in virtue, both for the pardon of sins, and for the supply of the most abundant blessings.”†

“The eternal WORD of the everlasting God is the supremely strong and firm support of the universe. Extended from the midst to the extremities, and from the summit to the midst, he moves round the unwearied course of nature, holding together and clasping all its parts. For the Father, who begat him, hath made him the unfailing bond of the universe.‡

* Χορεύει γὰρ ἐν κύκλῳ Λόγος ὁ θεῖος, ὃν οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὀνομάζουσι τύχην.—Ὁ δὲ θεῖος Λόγος ἐν πᾶσι [ἐπιφράττειν ἀξιοῖ] τὴν ἐκείνου καὶ τῶν ὁμοζήλων.—Λόγος δ' ἐστὶ θεῖος ἄγγελος ποδηγετῶν καὶ τὰ ἐν ποσὶν ἀναστέλλων. ἵνα ἄπταιστοι διὰ λεωφόρου βαίνωμεν τῆς ὁδοῦ. Ib. p. 298, 299.

† — τοῦ συνέχοντος καὶ διοικοῦντος Λόγου τὸ σύμπαν, τὸ λόγιον· ἀναγκαῖον γὰρ ἦν τὸν ἱερωμένον τῷ τοῦ κόσμου Πάτρι, παρακλήτῳ χρῆσθαι τελειοτάτῳ τὴν ἀρετὴν Ὑψί, πρὸς τε ἀμνησίαν ἀμαρτημάτων καὶ χορηγίαν ἀφθονωτάτων ἀγαθῶν. Tom. ii. p. 155.

‡ Νόμος [lege Λόγος, e citatione Eusebii, *Præp. Ev.* vii. 13. et ex mente Mangeii,] δὲ ὁ αἰδίδιος Θεοῦ αἰωνίου, τὸ ὀχυρώτατον καὶ

“ Concerning the Nature of God none can attain to perfect knowledge ; but it becomes us to be glad if we may be permitted to attain the knowledge of his Name, which indeed is that of the WORD his Interpreter. For the latter must be the God of us imperfect creatures ; but the former, of those who are wise and perfect. And Moses, admiring the majesty of the Unbegotten, saith, *And thou shalt swear by his Name*, not by himself. It is sufficient for us to confirm our veracity by the Begotten, and to establish our testimony by the Divine WORD.”†

Having treated of the cloud which protected the Israelites, but scattered terror on the Egyptians, (Exod. xiv. 19.) Philo appears to consider this intervention as bearing a similitude to the mediatorial office of the LOGOS ; and he thus proceeds : “ To the Archangel and Eldest WORD the Father of the universe has granted this pre-eminent gift, to stand as a Mediator, and to de-

βεβαιότατον ἔρεισμα τῶν ὅλων ἐστίν. Ὅυτος ἀπὸ τῶν μέσων ἐπὶ τὰ πέρατα, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄκρων εἰς μέσα, ταθεῖς, δολεχεύει τὸν τῆς φύσεως δρόμον ἀήττητον, συνάγων πάντα τὰ μέρη καὶ σφίγγων. Δεσμὸν γὰρ ἄρρηκτον τοῦ παντός ὁ γεννήσας ἐποίει Πατήρ. Tom. ii. p. 604.

† Ὅυδεις—περὶ τῆς φύσεως αὐτοῦ διαγνῶναι δύναται, ἀλλ’ ἀγαπήτὸν ἔαν τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ δυνηθῶμεν, ὅπερ ἦν τοῦ ἐρμηνέως Λόγου. Ὅυτος γὰρ ἡμῶν τῶν ἀτελῶν ἂν εἴη Θεός, τῶν δὲ σοφῶν καὶ τελείων, ὁ πρῶτος. Καὶ Μωσῆς μέντοι τὴν ὑπερβολὴν θαυμάσας τοῦ ἀγεννήτου, φησὶν, Καὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ ὁμῇ, οὐχὶ ἀντὶ· ἱκανὸν γὰρ τῷ γεννητῷ πιστοῦσθαι, καὶ μαρτυρεῖσθαι Λόγῳ θείῳ. Tom. i. p. 128.

termine between the creature and the Creator. He is at once the Suppliant, on behalf of perishing mortals, to the Unchangeable Being; and the Ambassador of the Sovereign to his subjects. He exults in this gift, and glorying in it he proclaims, *I have stood between the Lord and you*; being neither Unbegotten as God, nor begotten as you, but in the midst of the extremes, pledging myself for both; to the Creator, that the whole race [of man] shall not fall into ruin and apostacy; and to the creature, to maintain the glad hope that the merciful God will not overlook his own work. For I publish to the creation the message of peace, from God who can purge away enmities, and who is the perpetual Preserver of peace.”*

“The temples of God, as it appears, are two: one, this universe, the High Priest in which is his First-begotten Divine Word; and the

* Τῷ δ' ἀρχαγγέλῳ καὶ πρεσβυτάτῳ Λόγῳ δωρεὰν ἐξαίρετον ἔδωκεν ὁ τὰ ὅλα γεννήσας Πατήρ, ἵνα μεθόριος στὰς τὸ γινόμενον διακρίνῃ τοῦ πεποιηκότος. Ὁ δ' αὐτὸς ἱκέτης μὲν ἐστὶ τοῦ θνητοῦ, κηραίνοντος αἰεὶ, πρὸς τὸ ἄφθαρτον, πρεσβευτὴς δὲ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος πρὸς τὸ ὑπήκοον. Ἀγάλλεται δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ δωρεᾷ, καὶ σεμνυνόμενος αὐτὴν ἐκδιηγεῖται φάσκων, Κἀγὼ εἰστήκειν ἀνὰ μέσον Κυρίου καὶ ὑμῶν· οὔτε ἀγέννητος ὡς ὁ Θεὸς ὢν, οὔτε γεννητὸς ὡς ὑμεῖς, ἀλλὰ μέσος τῶν ἁκρῶν, ἀμφοτέροις ὁμηρεύων· παρὰ μὲν τῷ φυτεύσαντι, πρὸς πίστιν τοῦ μὴ σύμπαν ἀφανίσαι ποτὲ καὶ ἀποστῆναι τὸ γένος, ἀκοσμίαν ἀντὶ κόσμου ἐλόμενον· παρὰ δὲ τῷ φύντι, πρὸς ἐνελπιστίαν τοῦ μήποτε τὸν ἱλεων Θεὸν περιῦδεῖν τὸ ἴδιον ἔργον. Ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐπικηρυκέυσομαι τὰ εἰρηναῖα γενέσει παρὰ τοῦ καθαιρεῖν πολέμους ἐγνωκότος, ἐρηνοφύλακος αἰεὶ Θεοῦ. Tom. i. p. 501.

other, the rational soul whose high priest is man himself.”*

“ When a city is intended to be built,—a skilful architect, after surveying the agreeableness and advantages of the situation, first forms in his mind a conception of almost all the parts of the intended city; temples, places for athletic exercises, courts, markets, ports, docks, streets, the arrangement of the walls, the situations of the public buildings and of the other edifices. Having then received in his mind, as in wax, the shapes of the respective objects, he forms an ideal city, the images of which he revolves in his natural memory, and more and more impresses its characteristic forms; till, as a good workman who strictly regards his model, he begins to build the real city of stones and timber, making each of the material objects in conformity to the ideas of his mind. In some such way as this we may conceive concerning the Deity: that, having determined to build the great city [of the universe], he first conceived the model of it, from that model he composed an ideal world, and then completed the sensible world, using the former as a pattern. As, therefore, the city conceived in the mind of the architect has no external place, but is imprinted in the artist’s imagination; so also the

* Δύο γὰρ, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἱερὰ Θεοῦ· ἐν μὲν ὁδε ὁ κόσμος, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἀρχιερεὺς ὁ πρωτόγονος αὐτοῦ θεῖος Λόγος· ἕτερον δὲ λογικὴ ψυχὴ, ἧς ἱερεὺς ὁ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν ἄνθρωπος. Tom. i. p. 653.

world of ideal conceptions can have no other place than the Divine Word which hath formed these arrangements.”*

“ God, needing no adviser (for what other being was in existence?) but himself alone, thought fit to confer blessings, in unsparing and rich graces, upon the [human] nature which, without divine bestowment, was of itself incapable of obtaining any good. But he confers these blessings, not to the measure of the greatness of his graces; for they are indescribable and boundless; but in proportion to the capacities of the objects of his beneficence. For the capacity of a created nature to receive good, is not equal to the propensity of the divine nature to communicate it: since those divine powers are superlatively great, and the created nature is too weak to receive their greatness, but would faint under them, unless he dispensed them by properly adjusting the bestowment to each recipient. Now, to use plainer terms, that ideal world is indeed no other than the Word of the Creator God. For the ideal

* Ἐπειδὴν πόλις τις κτίζεται, — κ. τ. λ. — Τὰ παραπλήσια δὴ καὶ περὶ Θεοῦ δοξαστέον, ὅς ἄρα τὴν μεγαλόπαλιν κτίζειν διανοηθεὶς, ἐνενόησε πρότερον τοὺς τύπους αὐτῆς, ἐξ ὧν κόσμον νοητὸν συστησάμενος, ἀπετέλει τὸν αἰσθητὸν, παραδείγματι χρώμενος ἐκείνῳ. Καθάπερ οὖν ἡ ἐν τῷ ἀρχιτεκτονικῷ προδιατυπωθεῖσα πόλις, τὴν χώραν ἐκτὸς οὐκ εἶχεν, ἀλλ’ ἐνεσφράγιστο τῇ τοῦ τεχνίτου ψυχῇ, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον οὐδ’ ὁ ἐκ τῶν ἰδεῶν κόσμος ἄλλον ἂν ἔχοι τόπον, ἢ τὸν θεῖον Λόγον τὸν ταῦτα διακοσμήσαντα. Ib. p. 4.

city [before described] is nothing but the conception of the architect who is devising to form the actual city by the ideal one. Moses, not I, is the author of this doctrine: since, in the sequel of his description of the creation of man, he expressly declares, that *he was formed according to the image of God*. Since also the part of an image is an image, it is manifest that this whole external form, namely this sensible universe in all its parts, must be so; it being a greater resemblance of the image of God than the human image is. And further, it is manifest that the archetypal seal, which we affirm that the intellectual universe is, must itself be the archetypal model, the [first] form of all other forms [*or idea of ideas*], the Word of God."*

In these extracts I think that the sum of the doctrines of Philo, concerning the Word, may be found.

* 'Ουδενὶ δὲ παρακλήτῳ, τίς γὰρ ἦν ἕτερος; μόνῳ δ' ἑαυτῷ χρησάμενος ὁ Θεὸς, ἔγνω δεῖν ἐνεργετεῖν ἀταμιεύτοις καὶ πλουσίαις χάρισι τὴν ἄνευ δωρεᾶς θείας φύσιν ἐπιλαχεῖν ἐξ ἑαυτῆς οὐδενὸς ἀγαθοῦ δυναμένην. 'Αλλ' οὐ πρὸς τὸ μέγεθος ἐνεργετεῖ τῶν αὐτοῦ χαρίτων· ἀπερίγραφοι γὰρ αὐταί γε καὶ ἀτελεύτητοι· πρὸς δὲ τὰς τῶν ἐνεργετουμένων δυνάμεις. 'Οὐ γὰρ, ὡς πέφυκεν ὁ Θεὸς εὖ ποιεῖν, οὕτω καὶ τὸ γενόμενον εὖ πάσχειν· ἐπεὶ τοῦ μὲν, αἱ δυνάμεις ὑπερβάλλουσι, τὸ δ' ἀσθενέστερον ὢν ἢ ὥστε δέξασθαι τὸ μέγεθος αὐτῶν, ἀπεῖπεν ἂν, εἰ μὴ διεμετρήσατο σταθμησάμενος ἐναρμόστως τὸ ἐκάστῳ ἐπιβάλλον. 'Εἰ δὲ τις ἐθελήσειε γυμνοτέροις χρήσασθαι τοῖς ὀνόμασιν, οὐδὲν ἂν ἕτερον ἔιποι τὸν νοητὸν εἶναι κόσμον ἢ Θεοῦ Λόγον ἤδη κοσμοποιούντος. 'Ουδὲ γὰρ ἡ νοητὴ πόλις ἕτερόν τι ἐστὶν ἢ ὁ τοῦ Ἀρχιτέκτοκος λογισμὸς, ἥδη τὴν αἰσθητὴν πόλιν

To this object he gives the epithets of the Son of God, the First-begotten Son, the Eldest Son, the Word, the Divine Word, the Eternal Word, the Eldest Word, the Most Sacred Word, the First-begotten Word, the offspring of God as a stream from the fountain, the Beginning, the Name of God, the Shadow of God, the Image (εἰκὼν) of God, the Eternal Image, the Copied Image (ἀπεικόνισμα), the Express Image (χαρακτήρ) of the seal of God, the Branch or Rising Light (ἀνατολή), the Angel, the Eldest Angel, the Arch angel of many titles, the Inspector of Israel, the Interpreter of God, a Representative God, a second God, a God to those creatures whose capacities or attainments are not adequate to the contemplation of the Supreme Father.

This Word is described as presiding over all things; superior to the whole universe; the eldest of all objects that the mind can perceive, but not comparable to any object perceptible by sense, nor capable of being presented in a visible form; next to the self-existent.

τῇ νοητῇ κτίζειν διανοούμενου. Μωσέως ἐστὶ τὸ δὲ δόγμα τοῦτο, ὅνκ ἐμόν. Τὴν γοῦν ἀνθρώπου γένεσιν ἀναγράφων, ἐν τοῖς ἔπειτα ὁμολογεῖ διαβρῆδην, ὡς ἄρα κατ' εἰκόνα Θεοῦ διατυπώθη. Ἐὰν δὲ τὸ μέρος εἰκὼν εἰκόνας, δηλονότι καὶ το ὅλον εἶδος, ὃ σύμπας αἰσθητὸς οὐτοσὶ κόσμος· ὃ μεῖζόν ἐστι τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης, μίμημα θείας εἰκόνας. Δῆλον δὲ ὅτι καὶ ἡ ἀρχέτυπος σφραγὶς, ὃν φάμεν εἶναι κόσμον νοητὸν, αὐτὸς ἂν εἴη τὸ ἀρχέτυπον παράδειγμα, ἰδέα τῶν ιδέων, ὁ Θεοῦ Λόγος. Tom. i. p. 5.

To this Word are ascribed intelligence, design, and active powers ; he is declared to have been the Instrument of the Deity in the creation, disposition, and government of the universe, and in holding all its component parts in their proper order and functions, clothing himself with the universe as with a garment : he is the instrument and medium of divine communications, the High Priest and Mediator for the honour of God and the benefit of man, the Messenger of the Father, perfectly sinless himself, the Beginning and Fountain of virtue to men, their Guide in the path of obedience, the Protector and Supporter of the virtuous, and the Punisher of the wicked.

Yet, the WORD is also represented as being the same to the Supreme Intellect, that speech is to the human ; and as being the conception, idea, or purpose of the Creator existing in the Divine mind previously to the actual formation of his works.

It is for us now to inquire, in what manner we are to combine and understand these particulars.

1. If the last paragraph of the preceding analysis were to be taken absolutely and without restriction as a key to the other parts, our inquiry would be answered ; and it would be summarily decided that all those other attributives are nothing but personifications and allegories,

thus variously and fancifully representing the single idea of the original and eternal PLAN or DESIGN of the Infinite Intelligence.

This hypothesis would involve the charge on the writer before us, of an extravagance and luxuriance of imagination and diction, which might challenge all parallel among authors having the smallest pretensions to sobriety of thought. Such a style would be equally a violation of soundness in conception and reasoning, and of taste in composition. But Philo was no such preposterous writer. Unjustifiable and of injurious tendency as is his favourite principle of interpretation, that principle may be traced to the ambition of moulding revealed theology according to his system of philosophy. It is, likewise, observable that his doctrine concerning the WORD is, in a great measure, conveyed in the form of *interpretations* of the supposed allegories of scripture: and those interpretations are *professedly* given as the *literal* meaning of the allegories. But no sane writer could give interpretations of alleged enigmas in terms equally enigmatical with the things to be interpreted, or even more so.

2. Philo uses the term *Logos* with a great diversity of application; both in its proper and ordinary acceptations, and in other senses. He uses it to denote *reason, an idea, the relation* of one object to another, *speech, a discourse, a declaration, an account, a description, a written composition, the scrip-*

tures, an angelic being, and the *Divine Word* which is the subject of our consideration. It is not, therefore, improbable that, under the manifold appellations and representations of that Divine Word, he might have an intended diversity; he might have the notion of both an ideal and a personal Word.

3. The doctrine of a Messiah, as all acknowledge, formed the high and ardent expectation of the Jewish people, the hope to which they turned on every occasion, the pillar of their national glory and their personal happiness, to which they clung with invincible tenacity in their dispersions and afflictions. This was especially the fact when Philo lived. The expectation that the Messiah was coming, and that speedily, had taken a firm hold on the mind and feelings of almost every Jew. It would appear scarcely credible that Philo should have been an exception to this prevailing state of sentiment; a writer of extraordinary talents, jealous of the honour of his nation, and well acquainted with their scriptures. Yet, unless he intended the Messiah under the name of the *Logos*, it must be admitted that he has made no mention of the Messiah at all.

The general strain of sentiment apparent in the works of this author renders it antecedently probable that he would differ from the mass of his compatriots, with respect to the expectation of a bodily and actual appearance of the Messiah, and

his being conversant as a man among men. It would be in the tenor of Philo's doctrines to regard the existence and attributes of the Messiah as *purely* spiritual, and capable of being manifested *only* to the intellect of men. Accordingly we find him asserting that "the Divine Word does not come into a visible form," or representation [ἰδέα]; and that it is "not to be reckoned among any of the objects known by sense."* Perhaps this circumstance may furnish a solution to some of his discordant expressions. The spiritual idea was essential to the author's theory: it would therefore be uppermost in his mind, and would prove the occasion of his more copiously insisting on the particulars of his intellectual representations. It might even lead him, in zeal for his hypothesis, to the notion of the Logos being no other than the *conception* of the Eternal Mind; while other parts of his description, influenced, perhaps farther than he was aware of, by the prevailing opinion of the Jews in general, clearly recognize *personal* qualities. Such discordance is the probable, if not the certain, attendant of endeavours to unite truth with erroneous theory.

This opinion on the construction of Philo's

* Passages cited above. The same notion is included in the remark, "The Most Ancient of beings is unspeakable, since his Word is not expressible to us by any proper name." Τὸ τῶν ὄντων πρεσβύτερον ἄρρητον, ὅποτε ὁ Λόγος αὐτοῦ κυρίῳ ὀνόματι οὐ ῥητὸς ἡμῖν. Tom. i. p. 580.

theory gains some confirmation from the circumstance of his being so extremely sparing in quotations from Isaiah and the other prophets; though on more than one occasion he strongly declares his belief in their divine inspiration. The doctrine of the future Messiah, taught in those prophetic books, would be ill susceptible of adaptation to the learned Alexandrian's hypothesis. The allegorizing of plain histories, and the inventive talents of the writer, could furnish more tractable materials.

4. It appears to me, therefore, that there is *real inconsistency* in the assertions and doctrines of Philo concerning the Logos; but such inconsistency as, though not excusable, is yet capable of being accounted for on the common principles of human infirmity.

That the Jews, in all the latter periods of their history, were anxiously looking for the Messiah promised to their fathers, is sufficiently known. That it was natural and probable that they should apply to him the appellation of the Word, in the sense of *The Mediator*, we have seen reason to suppose from a former part of this investigation. Of this link in the chain, we cannot, indeed, speak with absolute assurance: but, I think, it will appear, on impartial consideration, to be PROBABLE in a high degree. It seems even necessary, in order to join an antecedent fact and a consequent, of which each taken singly is indu-

bitable; namely, the use of the term *The Word of the Lord*, by the Chaldee Paraphrasts; and its assumption in the New Testament as a recognized appellative of the Messiah. Which is the more probable, that those two facts should have existed without any connection; or, that such a connection did exist, in the manner which we have supposed, and that the written monuments of it have perished by the injuries of time?—Not indeed altogether perished: for the positions and even the inconsistencies of Philo furnish a strong presumption of the existence and establishment of the sentiment among his Jewish brethren; and the incidental testimony of Celsus, adduced in a former Section of this Chapter, is no inconsiderable argument.*

From all the circumstances, it seems to me the most reasonable conclusion, that the leading acceptance of the *Memra* or *Logos*, among the Jews of this middle age, was to designate an *intermediate agent*; that, in the sense of a Mediator between God and man, it became a recognized appellative of the Messiah; that the *personal* doctrine of the WORD was the one generally received; and that the *conceptual* notion, which Philo interweaves with the other, was purely his own invention, the result of his theological philosophy, and the filling up, as it were, and finishing of a favourite theory.†

* See p. 410 of this volume.

† See Note [C] at the end of this Section.

From Josephus we can gain no information : nor at this are we surprized. He lived when the claims of Jesus to the Messiahship were strenuously asserted and abundantly demonstrated. He witnessed the triumphant diffusion of Christianity : but he was unmoved by its authority and its evidence. To refute was out of his power : to be silent, therefore, was his most politic measure ;* and his silence is equivalent to the strongest testimony. That the man who could suppress important facts in his long and elaborate history, when they did not tell for the honour of his nation ;† who could adapt his statements to the palate of idolaters, and even hazard the claim of exclusive adoration to the Only God in order to pay court to the heathen ;‡ who to secure himself from danger, did not scruple to apply the prophecies of the Messiah to Vespasian ;§—that such a man should maintain a studied reserve on the great Object of the faith and hope of his fathers, was perfectly in character.

* See Note [D] at the end of this Section.

† For example, the history of the golden calf made by the Israelites in the wilderness.

‡ Such as the close of the 10th Book of his Antiquities, where he temporizes with impiety : and his affirming that his nation was forbidden by the law of Moses to ridicule or speak reproachfully of the gods of other countries : *contra Apion*. Lib. ii. § 32.

§ *De Bello Jud.* Lib. iii. cap. vii. § 9.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

TO

SECT. IV.

Note [A] p. 419.

I have endeavoured to give due attention to the arguments by which the learned Dr. John Jones, in his *Ecclesiastical Researches* and other publications, has laboured to establish that Philo and Josephus were Christians, and that a principal object of their writings was to vindicate and recommend Christianity. He has maintained his hypothesis with much ingenuity and eloquence; but he seems to have drawn more largely, from his powers of imagination and his facility of improving slight resemblances, than from his erudition or his judgment. The following appear to me to be decisive objections to his hypothesis.

1. The coincidences, numerous and remarkable as they are between the phraseology of Philo and that of the New Testament, may rationally be accounted for on other and well-known grounds. The idiom of the New Testament writers is universally admitted to be that of those Jews, profusely scattered through the Roman empire, whose vernacular language was Greek; and of them the Alexandrians were the most devoted to letters and theology. They all derived their phraseology from the Old Testament, with the comments and amplifications of their professional teachers. It is evident, as Lightfoot, Schoettgenius, and Wetstein have amply proved, that Jesus Christ himself drew much of the language and manner of his discourses

from the current phrases and formularies of the synagogue. It could not, therefore, but follow that writers so circumstanced as were Philo and the apostles would have a frequent community of sentiment, and many resemblances and even identities of expression.

It should also be recollected that not a few, and those very remarkable, similarities of thought and expression to such as occur in the scriptures, may be selected from the writings of Plato, Seneca, and Marcus Antoninus ; not to mention Epictetus, whom Dr. Jones conceives to have pilfered his best sentences from a Christian family. Many striking instances may be compendiously found in Müller's *Chrestomathia Platoniana*, Zurich, 1756, and in our Puritan countryman Gataker's admirable *Præloquium* to his *Antoninus*, 1652 or 1697.

2. If Philo were a Christian, he must have embraced the gospel in the very early part of the apostolic ministry ; and even then he was an old man. It is difficult to suppose that he could have become so voluminous an author in the decline of life : yet this must be supposed on Dr. Jones's hypothesis, for his numerous and very prolix works all bear the same character. But a greater difficulty is involved, namely, that a person of Philo's dignity, character, and authority, all of which qualities he possessed in a very high degree, should have been one of the *early* believers in Christianity, and yet that no mention is made of him in the Acts or in any other part of the New Testament. Such an omission one might almost pronounce to be impossible. If Philo were a Christian at all, he was a *more* illustrious convert and a *more* ample and laborious writer on the religion of Jesus, than even the apostle Paul : and his writings, with those of Josephus (admitting the hypothesis), contain more splendid accounts of the propagation and triumphs of Christianity, than any which the New Testament furnishes. In the Book of Acts and in the Epistles many names occur of persons who were comparatively of little note : but here it is supposed, that a person *of the first eminence* in rank and talents, in eloquence, integrity, and influence among the Grecian Jews, embraced the gospel before, or not long after, the conversion of Paul, his junior by five and twenty or thirty years ;—and yet that neither Luke in

his history, nor Paul in the numerous commemorations of believers at the conclusions of his epistles, should have indicated the smallest knowledge of such a person!

3. Philo never names Jesus, nor recites or alludes to any of the great facts of his life, death, and resurrection. Dr. Jones, indeed, maintains that "he speaks, and very frequently speaks, of the Blessed Jesus, though under those lofty titles which distinguish him as the minister of heaven;"—but, being "a deliberate, a circumspect, and a wise man,—he has every where avoided to awaken the prejudices of those unbelievers to whom he addressed his works, by mentioning the personal name of Jesus Christ." (*Ecclesiastical Researches*, p. 123.) To this it is obvious to reply:

(1.) That those "lofty titles," (the Word, the Son of God, the High Priest, &c. &c.) cannot be assumed as descriptive of Jesus, without a *petitio principii*. The reader who has perused the large collection of passages adduced in this Section, must consider for himself whether it is probable that those passages were designed to describe Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah actually come, and his doctrine and authority under bold and magnificent personifications. As to supposed allusions to the history of Jesus, those which the learned author alleges are extremely few; they are confessedly veiled in allegorical, or in very general and distant terms; not one of them could be attributed to the objects alleged, as their plain and necessary meaning; and such attribution could with any plausibility be made only on the assumption, which requires to have been proved by independent evidence, that Philo was a Christian writer.

(2.) The *circumspection* and *wisdom* to which is ascribed Philo's suppression of the name and personal history of Jesus, were qualities very different from the spirit and conduct which were enjoined and exemplified by Jesus himself and his apostles. I fear it would have been by them considered as carnal and unworthy policy, as being ashamed of the cross of Christ, as not owning *him* before men. Paul, for instance, was a younger man, of less authority than Philo, and with much stronger motives to have adopted smooth and conciliatory measures: but did he clothe his evangelical message with a system of abstractions and

allegories? Did not he, in the very place where *circumspection* and management might have seemed the most necessary, “speak boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus?” (Acts ix. 20, 22, 29.)

(3.) If the persons whom Philo was so anxious not to offend really comprehended the supposed tacit references; the suppression of our Lord’s personal name *Jesus*, and of his official title *the Christ*, was nugatory, and was even more likely to disgust than a manly and open avowal would have been. But, if they did not so comprehend; if they could have been led to embrace Philo’s system without knowing it to be Christianity; it must have been something very different from the Christianity of Matthew, John, and Paul, it must have been “*another* gospel,” which Christ and his apostles would have disowned.

(4.) Philo never mentions any of the apostles or the other primitive labourers in the diffusion of Christianity, of whom the most honourable notices occur in the New Testament.

(5.) It is a part of Dr. Jones’s theory, that, under the appellations of Jews and Judaism, which Philo and Josephus represent as embraced by immense multitudes of converts from heathenism, those writers intended to signify Christians and Christianity. If this were admitted, it would surely be a kind of conduct very different from that of the New Testament disciples of Jesus: *they* were not ashamed or afraid to own “that worthy name by which they were called.” Dr. J. considers the conversion of such vast numbers of native heathens to pure Judaism as impossible; and therefore infers that the new religion which so powerfully attracted them, could be no other than Christianity, the fulfilment and the perfection of the Hebrew revelation. But may there not have been, in the statements of those eloquent writers, a mixture of rhetorical exaggeration, when they describe the extent of proselytism?—In the comparatively enlightened period which closely preceded the propagation of the gospel, it is credible, and it is evident from the writings of Cicero, Horace, and others, that numbers of cultivated and reflecting persons were dissatisfied with the popular mythology, and probably disgusted with the gross impostures of the priests and the practical immoralities of the whole system. Upon such minds, the rational doctrines and the holy precepts of genuine Judaism

were likely to make a deep impression : and the knowledge of it was readily communicated by the numerous Jews, especially from Alexandria and other parts of Egypt, whom commerce and connexions had dispersed through the great cities of the empire. This was an admirable preparation of divine providence for the more ready and extensive reception of Christianity. Such proselytes are several times alluded to in the Acts of the Apostles (see chap. ii. 10. xiii. 16, 50. xvii. 4, 17.) Many of them received the gospel, but others rejected it, and strenuously persecuted its messengers.

Note [B] p. 424.

At the beginning of the last period in this passage, καλεῖ δὲ τὸν Θεόν, the Medicean MS. at Florence, which is of very high antiquity and authority, and another in the Library of New College, Oxford, purporting to be transcribed from an ancient copy at Padua in 1533, omit the article : and this reading is preferred by Mangey and others. But it seems to me that the common reading, which is that of the majority of manuscripts, is entitled to the preference ; (1.) because the sentence is evidently exceptive and is introduced with a reason for the apparent deviation from the rule which the writer had just been laying down : and (2.) because it is his uniform doctrine, that *He who appeared* to the patriarchs was the Logos.

One cannot but remark the extreme futility of Philo's argument. He writes as if he were ignorant (which can scarcely be thought possible) that τόπος Θεοῦ is merely a translation of the proper name *Bethel* : and, as to his doctrine on the insertion or the absence of the article, it is contradicted by numerous instances in the Version which he was constantly using. See, for example, Deut. iv. 24, 31, 33, 35, 39. v. 9. vii. 9, 21. x. 17, 21. xxvi. 17. xxix. 13. xxxii. 4, 17. Ps. lxi. [Heb. lxii.] 2, 6. &c. &c.

It is, however, worthy of observation that another Alexandrian, two centuries after Philo, made a similar application of the same supposed rule of idiom. Origen affirms that the Evangelist John “ puts the article when the appellative Θεός

denotes the Unbegotten Creator of the Universe, but withholds it when the Logos is named Θεός." (*Origen. Comment. in Johann. Sect. ii. ap. Opera, ed. Delarue, tom. iv. p. 50.*) Yet the absolute error of this assertion will be manifest to any one who will turn to John i. 18. viii. 54. xx. 17.

Those who have duly considered the amazing attainments which have been made in Greek literature by such scholars as Casaubon and Salmasius, Gataker, and Bentley, Hemsterhuis, Porson, and Burney, will not deem the supposition extravagant that the niceties of that language are now better understood, from the sagacity and the labours of those illustrious men and others who have trod in their steps, than they were by many of the original Greek authors themselves. The etymologies of Plato, and the grammatical notions of Philo and Origen, may be considered as on a par. An exquisite Grecian of the present day, the Bishop of Calcutta, in the course of his observations on the pure and classical use of the article, has these words: "The only Greek prose writer, so far as I know, who without these or similar reasons appears to disregard the usage, is Philo Judæus. His style is, indeed, florid and oratorical; but, at the same time, by no means correct. Josephus, another Jew, and the contemporary of Philo, is not liable to the same censure." *Middleton's Doctrine of the Greek Article, p. 55.*

Note [C] p. 445.

Since writing the above, I have found that the same opinion of a double signification of the *Logos*, a conceptual and a personal, had occurred to some of the German scripture-critics.

"In the phrase used by the Chaldee paraphrasts, most critics suppose that nothing is comprehended but a designation of the Deity: but it has been admirably demonstrated, chiefly from the Targums, by Dr. Charles Aug. Theoph. Keil (in his *Essay de Doctoribus Vet. Eccl. culpâ corruptæ per Platonicas Sententias Theologiæ liberandis*), that the Jews, by their *Memra of Jah*, designed to convey the notion of a Divine Subsistence, which they held to be begotten of God, and to be in the highest sense near and like to God.—The same learned writer shows that the doctrine of Philo contained the notion of a

twofold *Logos*, the one comprehended in the divine intellect, the other begotten of God: just as the conception in one's mind is different from the word uttered in speech." *Rosenmüller in Joann.* i. 1.

The following abstract from the German *Commentaries* of the celebrated Dr. *H. E. G. Paulus*, Theological Professor in the University at Jena, is given by Dr. *Kuinæ* in the *Prolegomena* to his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*. "Paulus maintains that Philo was not the author of this doctrine of the *Logos* as a subsistence emanating from God, most like to God, and intimately united with him; but that it was generally received, by the Jews of Alexandria, in the time of Philo. He is of opinion that it was invented by the philosophizing Jews of that city, with a view to obviate the arguments of the gentile philosophers, who defended their popular systems of a multitude of inferior deities by affirming that the care of the material world, a particular providence, and the government of the affairs of men, were objects too low for the majesty and purity of the Supreme Deity. He thinks that the Alexandrian Jews might the more readily adopt this opinion of the *Logos* being an intelligent nature, because of their own doctrine of angels and guardian spirits, and because the Jews of Palestine were in the habit of using, as expressions for the Divine Being, the phrases, *Memra of Jah*, *Word of God*, *Wisdom of God*; as also they personified the wisdom of God; Prov. viii. 22.—Therefore, as Paulus has observed, the form of expression, ὁ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the Word of God*, was used, in the age of the Evangelist John, in a twofold sense. The Jews of Palæstine (as appears from the work of the son of Sirach who was a Jew of Palæstine, and from the Chaldee Targums), and also the author of the apocryphal book *the Wisdom of Solomon*, employed the expression merely as a periphrasis for the Deity, and very often as a personification of the power and wisdom of God. But, on the other hand, Philo, and with him many of the Alexandrian Jews, by *The Word* understood an intelligent subsistence, absolutely unique, an emanation from God, and next to the Supreme God. — Professor Paulus further remarks, that the Evangelist did not deliver his doctrine of *The Word* (as an intelligent nature, absolutely

unique, emanating from God, and next to God, and that this intelligent nature had united itself with the man Jesus), because the Alexandrian Jews professed the same sentiments with respect to their *Word*; but because Christ had, in express terms, made almost the identical attributions of dignity and honour to himself, which those Alexandrians were accustomed to ascribe to their *Word of God*." *Kuinæ*, vol. iii. p. 80, 82.

There is no necessity to have recourse to Paulus's hypothesis of the origination of the Alexandrian doctrine of the Logos. The prophecies and descriptions of the Jewish scriptures were amply sufficient to furnish the materials: while it is not impossible that some expressions and applications of the doctrine might have been excited by the writings and disputations of philosophic gentiles.

Long after the preceding observations were written, I have had the gratification of finding that the hypothesis which had occurred to me from the study of Philo's writings alone, had been maintained by an author in whose family sacred learning has eminently flourished for more than a century;—John Benedict Carpzovius; and, as he informs us, before him, by a divine of our own country. "For the right understanding of the doctrine of Philo on the Logos, it must be observed that he in fact makes two Logi, and mixes and confounds them together so as to produce great perplexity. The one, deduced from the doctrines of Plato on *ideas* and the *Mind* [*Noûς, ὁ πάντων ἄριστος* *Platon. Phædon*, § 46. *ed. Forster*, p. 260.] merely denotes the *foreknowledge* of the Supreme Being about the creation of the world; a conception formed in the Divine mind, and then emanating as a model after which the world was to be framed. This Logos, being brought forth as a kind of emanation from the Deity partaking of his nature, is called a *son of God*, yet inferior in the order both of nature and of time to God himself; and is very often confounded by Philo with the soul of the world, and with the world itself. The other doctrine is of a more exalted character, being deduced from the scriptures and the genuine principles of the Jewish religion: it represents the Logos as the first-born Son of God. the Only-begotten, the High Priest of men, sinless, immortal, the Shepherd of the world, the Archangel, the Image

of the Father—On this double doctrine of Philo's Logos, some just views were entertained by Stephen Nye, an English clergyman; in a work *on the Trinity, in reply to Allix*, quoted with approbation by Samuel Crellius in his *Initium Evang. Johann. Restit.* p. 326.—Vitranga also (*De Synag. Veteri*, p. 624), affirms that, though Philo drew many particulars from Plato, yet his doctrine of the personal Logos he had derived from confused Jewish traditions."—*Carpzovii Philoniana*, Lib. VII. cap. vi. Helmstadt, 1750.

Note [D] p. 446.

To the intelligent reader it can be scarcely necessary to say that the celebrated passage concerning Jesus (*Antiq. Jud.* Lib. xviii. Cap. iv. § 3.) has little claim to be regarded as genuine. All doubts on this head, in my humble opinion, are removed by Dr. Lardner (*Jewish and Heathen Testim. Works*, vol. vii. p. 120—129), and especially by the admirable remarks of the Abbé Bullet, in Dr. Kippis's edition of *Lardner's Works*, vol. i. App. X. to the Life. And to this opinion I cannot but still adhere, notwithstanding the strenuous effort of the learned author before mentioned, Dr. Jones, to restore the generally exploded opinion. The objections stated in a preceding note to the supposed Christianity of Philo, apply in a great measure to the case of Josephus. Dr. Jones's whole hypothesis appears to me to stand solely on assumptions or on fallacious reasonings. He relies much on the multitudes of proselytes asserted by the Jewish historian: but, besides the grounds of demur to this argument hinted at before, I conceive it not impossible, nor improbable, that Josephus might take to the honour of his nation the credit of the numerous and extensive conversions to Christianity, which were effected through the ministry of the apostles: availing himself of the general prejudice of the Romans and Greeks, who, without examination, set down the Christians as a Jewish sect. As a specimen of the very slight grounds on which that eminent scholar frequently builds the most novel and surprizing conclusions, we may refer to *Josephus against Apion*, Lib. ii. § 30.

Nothing can be plainer than that the writer is, in that passage, pursuing his topic of just commendation on the wisdom and benignity of the Mosaic laws. After adducing many instances from the Pentateuch, he passes on to the motive which had such a powerful effect in producing the inflexible attachment of the Jews to their law, and their readiness to endure every extremity rather than violate it: and this he declares to be a full belief, attended with the testimony of a good conscience, “the lawgiver having foretold, and God *having afforded the strong assurance* (τὴν πίστιν ἰσχυρὰν παρεσχηκότος), that to those who keep the laws, and, if necessary, cheerfully die for them, God has granted to be brought into existence again, and *in return* (ἐκ περιτροπῆς) to receive a better life.” The unbiassed reader cannot but perceive that the lawgiver is Moses, and that the *πίστις ἰσχυρὰ* is the *strong faith* or *persuasion* in the mind of the individual, that God will, according to his promise, reward him in the life to come. Πίστις is manifestly the abstract of *πεπίστευκε* in the preceding clause. Dr. J. though his habitual attention to the association of ideas, as an instrument of philology, ought to have preserved him especially from this oversight, has not perceived the correspondence of the two words, and has translated the clause, “God having confirmed it by a decisive pledge.” On this he comments;—“The only *decisive pledge* which God has given of this assurance is the resurrection of Christ: *to this*, therefore, Josephus *must allude*.” (*Eccl. Researches*, p. 551.) In a more recent paper he has very properly improved his version into “God has afforded a *mighty proof*,” but still refers it to the resurrection of Christ. (*Mr. Valpy’s Classical Journal*, vol. xvii. p. 201, March, 1818.) To serve his hypothesis in another respect also, Dr. J. renders ἐκ περιτροπῆς, “after a revolution of years,” (*Eccl. Res.*) and, growing bolder in the *Classical Journal*, “after a revolution of ages:”* whereas the phrase is as predicable of a short, as of a long, portion of time, and merely denotes that the happiness of the martyr should *succeed* his sufferings. It is even more favourable to the idea of an *imme-*

* More recently still, he has adopted the words, “after a period.” (*Monthly Repos.* June, 1818, p. 358.)

diate succession, than of one interrupted by any considerable period. Budæus has well illustrated the phrase. “Περιτροπή, *circumactus* et quod Latini dicunt, *in orbem aliquid facere*. Hoc Græci ἐκ περιτροπῆς. *Basil. Homil. viii.* Πῶς μὲν αἱ γέραναι τὰς ἐν νυκτὶ φυλακὰς ἐκ περιτροπῆς ὑποδέχονται. *Liv. iii. 35.* Quum ita priores decemviri servassent, ut unus fasces haberet, et hoc insigne regium *in orbem*, suam cujusque vicem, per omnes iret.” *Budæi Commentarii Ling. Gr. Bas. 1557, col. 589.* See also *Livy*, i. 17.

SECT. V.

ON THE JEWISH RABBINICAL WRITINGS.

THAT the Jews in the middle ages, and their successors of the present day, have looked for only a human Messiah, it would be superfluous to prove: nor will any one attribute value to their opinions and interpretations, who adverts to the defiance of all reason and common understanding which appears in their avowed notions and expectations. While they reject the rational evidences and doctrines of Christianity, there are no absurdities too monstrous for them to pretend, at least, to believe; or too revolting, for them not to inculcate upon each other. SUCH is the “blindness which hath happened unto Israel!”*

But it is not impossible that, in the writings of this unhappy people, some remains may be discoverable of their better and earlier faith.

In the Talmudical writings, frequent and ho-

* See *Mr. Allen's Modern Judaism*: a faithful account of the puerilities and miserable superstitions which the unhappy Jews prefer to the reasonable service of Christianity.

nourable mention is made of Rabbi Simeon the son of Jochai, who is said to have been a disciple of Akiba, and to have been born before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. A collection of Cabalistical Doctrines, called *the Book ZOHAR*, or *the Book of Light*, is extant, which is affirmed to have been gathered up after Simeon's death, from his oral instructions, by his pupils and companions; in the same manner as the sayings of Socrates were collected by Xenophon. This book is written in the Chaldee dialect, similar to that of the Targums; a dialect which became totally extinct by the fourth or fifth century of the Christian æra, and was succeeded, in Jewish literature, by the Talmudical Hebrew.* The cir-

* I have before me the edition of Sultzbach, 1680, a small folio of 368 pages, closely printed in double columns, and in the Rabbinical character. It has not a single word except in Hebrew or Chaldee, in the title or in any other part. Its title is "the Book *Zohar* (זוהר Light or Illustration) upon the Law, from that holy and very venerable man of God the Tanna Rabbi *Simeon*, the son of *Jochai*."—Tanna (תנא) is a Rabinnical title of honour, denoting a Teacher of the Mìshna, or oral law.

"SIMEON, the son of Jochai, a very celebrated man among the Jews, was a scholar of the Rabbi Akiba, and flourished about the year 120. At the time of the insurrection excited by Barchocheba he fled, through fear of the Romans, and retired to a cave, where he concealed himself twelve years, in the course of which he is said to have composed the well-known work entitled "Sohar;" a cabalistic explanation of the five books of Moses; but, on account of the abstract metaphysical manner in which it is written, and the matter being clothed, according to the Egyptian method, in hieroglyphical images and very florid language, it is not easily understood. In regard to the antiquity of it, a dif-

cumstance of its language and style is held, by those who are sufficiently skilled in the Hebraic dialects, to be decisive of its having been written at or very near the time to which it is attributed. The style is extremely obscure and enigmatical, so as to have deterred from its study almost all but the most profound and patient scholars in this department of learning. Some parts of the work, or interpolations, seem to indicate several dates. Being unable to read this book with sufficient intelligence, I have recourse to the more easy method of extracting passages from the ample collections of Schoettgenius. That eminent scholar devoted a large portion of his life to the study of the Zohar, and has made much use of it for the illustration of the New Testament, in his *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ*. He entertained the opinion that Simeon was a Christian, of the description of those “many myriads of Jews who believed, and were all zealously attached to the law.”* Serious objections to this opinion were advanced by another Lutheran clergyman, Glæsener of Hildesheim: and Schoettgenius candidly republished his

ference of opinion has prevailed; some assigning it to the tenth century: and it is the more difficult to speak with certainty on the subject, as both parties seem to have possibility and even probability on their side. This much, however, can be said, that it contains things which are very old; but it is allowed by Christians, as well as Jews who held it in esteem, to be the production of more authors than one, and to have been enlarged, from time to time, by various additions.” *General Biography, by Dr. Aikin, Mr. Morgan, and others.*

* Acts xxi. 20.

opponent's *Diatribæ Philologica* in the valuable work above mentioned, appending his own rejoinder in defence of his original opinion. To me it appears that Glæsener has the stronger side of the argument. But, in either case, if the genuineness of the Zohar be admitted, (excluding manifest interpolations, the intrusion of which was very probable into a collection of miscellaneous and unconnected dictates, opinions, and interpretations of scripture passages), the use to which we may convert it will be not at all affected. On either supposition the report of Simeon and his disciples will be good evidence of the sentiments held by, at least, some of the Jewish nation, about the period of the last dispersion, concerning the PERSON of the Messiah. Dr. Mangey, indeed, considers the Zohar as a supposititious work of some Rabbi of the seventh century or later : but the only reason which he intimates for this conjecture, is that " it states the mysteries of the faith as clearly and distinctly as any Christian writer."* This assumption, however, is far from being correct. The book is full of Judaical doctrines, totally inconsistent with Christianity. I suspect that Mangey was misled by the strong colouring which Allix bestows upon his citations from the Zohar, as he has done on those from Philo and the Targums. It is next to incredible that a voluminous work could be written in the Targumic Chaldee, so late as the seventh century. That we

* *Præf. in Philonem*, p. xiv.

have no account of this work till the thirteenth century, will not appear very surprizing to any who consider the fact that other works of high antiquity, of undoubted authenticity, easy of perusal, and unspeakably more likely to have kept up a constant interest, were completely hidden through the dark ages. The Institutions of Quintilian were not discovered till 1415; and the Fables of Phædrus not till 1596. Even since this volume began to be written, some Orations and fragments of other works attributed to Cicero, and undoubtedly of classical antiquity, have been brought to light, from the buried treasures of the Ambrosian Library at Milan.

The following are extracts from Schoettgenius's numerous citations.

“The Angel of the Lord, which is the Shechinah:” referring to Exod. iii. 2.*

“God the Holy and Blessed is perfectly united with the Shechinah:” literally, “united in one unity.”†

“There was the Shechinah, God the Holy and Blessed, who is one.”‡

“It is He who liveth for ever and ever, who is arrayed with the name (Metatron) Mediator.”§

* *Schoetg. Hor. Hebr. et Talm.* tom. ii. p. 451.

† *Ib.* p. 353.

‡ *Ib.* p. 335.

§ *Ib.* 334.

“ The Mediator is the Servant of the Lord, the Elder of his house, who is the head of the creation of the Lord, exercising dominion over all things that are his ; for the Holy and Blessed God hath given him dominion over all.”*

There are other passages which, on account of being deeply involved in enigmatical terms, could not be quoted without large explications ; but the sense and purport of them are that the Shechinah is both of a heavenly and an earthly nature ; that the Messiah is the Shechinah, the Angel of the covenant, the Mediator, the Redeemer, the Just One ; that the Shechinah is the Heavenly High Priest, and the Fountain of life ; that all the perfections† belong to the Messiah. In several places the Divine name “, the Chaldee abridgement of JEHOVAH, is in a circuitous manner given to the Shechinah.

I subjoin a part of the summary drawn up by Schoettgenius himself.

“ With respect to the names of the Messiah, he is expressly called in the book Sohar by the incommunicable name Jehovah, the Angel of God, the Shechinah or Divine Glory, the Mediator, Michael the Archangel, the Angel of the covenant, the Word of the Lord, God the Holy and

* lb. p. 427.

† Called the *Sephiroth*, and supposed to be enumerated in 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

Blessed :——the Image of God, the Brightness of his glory, the Lord of hosts, the Son of God, the Son of the Most High, the faithful Shepherd, the Lord of the ministering angels,——the Angel Redeemer.”—*

When the utmost allowance is made that reason will warrant, for the figurative style and the mystical character of this ancient book, a sufficiency of evidence will yet remain that the doctrines concerning the Messiah which existed among the Jews about the time of their dispersion, had indeed much of the characters of obscurity and indistinct apprehension, but that, without any reasonable ground of question, they attributed to him a superior nature, a pre-existent state, and, to say the least, many characteristic properties of Deity.†

* Ib. p. 911, 912, 913.

† Dr. Kuinoel, in his *Prolegomena* to the Gospel of John, has brought forwards a variety of Rabbinical citations to prove that, in the age of Jesus, the opinions which existed among the Jews, in relation to the nature and person of their ardently expected Messiah, were by no means uniform: some affirming that he would be a mere man, endowed with peculiar powers and assistance from God; others, that he would be a man with whom a special power emanating from God would be intimately conjoined; others maintaining that he would be superior to their fathers, to all mankind, and to the angels, that he existed before the creation of the world, and was employed by God as an instrument in the formation and government of the world, and peculiarly in the protection and religious institutions of the Israelitish nation. *Comment. in Libros N. T. Hist.* p. 84—91.

So far as I can gain information on a subject which it would require the labour of almost a whole life to collect from its original sources, the extant Talmuds furnish no materials of any value in respect to the inquiry before us. They are almost exclusively occupied with the minutiae of ceremonies and the casuistry of ritual traditions,

SECT. VI.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS INQUIRY INTO THE
STATE OF OPINION AMONG THE JEWS AT THE PERIOD RE-
FERRED TO.

WE may now put together the notices which we have been able to collect, on the state of *general opinion* among the Jews at and near the era of the origin of Christianity, on the question, Of what kind would be the person and character of their expected Messiah?

The particulars, as they have been collected at the close of each of the preceding heads of inquiry, need not to be repeated. The review seems to show that those articles of current, or of extensive, belief, were *sublime, imperfectly understood, and in some respects inconsistent.*

I. They were *sublime*. This is manifest from the attribution which we have found of pre-existence, dignity above all the objects of creation, and properties peculiar to the Deity.

II. They were *imperfectly understood*. This could not but be the case from the nature of the

subject, from the reference of the expectation to a future and unknown time, and from the necessary obscurity belonging to unfulfilled prophecy, the great source from which these sentiments were drawn.

III. They were, in various respects, *inconsistent*. Not only did one theory oppose another, but each appears to have laboured under difficulties and contradictions within itself. Of such inconsistency we have an example in the case of Philo: and it is readily accounted for, from the mixture of traditionary opinions and diversified hypotheses with the stream of knowledge derived from the Old Testament prophecies. The subject was in itself obscure, and, under all the circumstances, it was not to be expected that the serious and inquisitive Jews of this period could avoid running into conjectures and incoherent notions.

It is probable that this imperfection and inconsistency were still further promoted by a notion which had acquired a very general acceptance among the Jews at the time of which we are speaking. As piety decayed, and as the conquests of the Macedonians and the Romans spread before the eyes of the Jewish people the glare of military glory and the pomp of dominion, they became more and more secular in their views and expectations. Their hopes of a Messiah became closely united with their national pride and their wishes for an universal ascendancy. The figu-

rative representations of the Messiah's reign, given by the holy prophets, were eagerly taken in a literal signification, and were associated with still grosser ideas of ambition and voluptuousness. Thus the bulk of the nation rapidly lost sight of the spiritual and holy objects with which the language of prophecy surrounds its descriptions of the Messiah; and sunk into the habit of regarding him as a politician and a hero. Such an opinion must have strongly disposed them to take up exclusive views of their Great Deliverer as a *man merely*, and as a man of the world, earthly and carnal in his purposes and his character. At the same time, the vestiges of purer sentiments still lingered in the hearts of many, whose devotional and religious habits of mind would represent the best "consolation of Israel" to consist in a holy salvation and a spiritual Redeemer. To such persons the ancient faith would present stronger attractions than they could feel from the worldly expectations with which popular partialities had entangled their minds; and, though unable to free themselves entirely from the fond delusion, they would still be looking for nobler blessings when "the Lord whom they sought should suddenly come to his temple," and "as the light of the morning should arise JEHOVAH, a Sun without clouds for brightness."*

* A sentiment similar to this was advanced by Dr. Semler, the celebrated leader of the theologians termed liberal, in Germany. Bishop Marsh calls him "the immortal Semler;" and adds, "The original genius of this great critic and divine permitted

The reader will now be able to judge with what degree of argumentative suitableness and justice this topic is treated in the *Calm Inquiry*. It forms the subject of a Section, under the title, "The arguments which are alleged to prove that the Jews, in the time of Christ, believed in the pre-

him in no case to be a blind follower of the opinion of others. He ascended constantly to the source himself, examined with his own eyes, and made more discoveries in sacred criticism and ecclesiastical history, than the envy of his contemporaries has been willing to admit." *Marsh's Michaelis*. vol. ii. p. 639.

"Hunc in ordinem haud dubiè pertinent multi ex doctoribus illis et prophetis qui, præter Levitarum ministeria κοσμικά, meliorem cognitionem Dei, regni Dei in omnes homines moralis, adepti fuerunt, et longè augustiora exercitia subinde docuerunt, in psalmis et aliis libellis, quæ λατρείαν λογικὴν commendabant. Iidem sic spirituali vitâ aucti, abstinerunt ab omni abusu corporearum rerum, spiritualium beneficiorum ipsi participes. Itaque et longè aliam ideam reipublicæ divinæ, regis sperati *Messiae*, et instaurati regni in omnes gentes, bonis mentibus præiverunt; licet plerique homines, ψυχικοὶ et σαρκικοὶ, ista πνευματικά nec intellexerint satis, nec appetierint." "To this class doubtless belonged many of the Jewish teachers and prophets who, rising above the Levitical ceremonies, obtained a superior knowledge of God and of his moral government over mankind, and uttered far more noble strains in their psalms and other compositions, which enjoined a "reasonable service." (Rom. xii. 1.) Endowed with spiritual life and partaking of spiritual blessings, they made a right use of those outward observances. They also showed to the minds of the pious a very different representation of the divine dispensations, of the expected King the Messiah, and of his universal reign: while the majority being "sensual and carnal" (1 Cor. ii. 14.) had no just knowledge of those spiritual things, nor any desires after them." *Jo. Sal. Semleri Inst. ad Doctr. Christ. liberaliter descendam*. Halæ Magd. 1774. p. 314.

existence of their expected Messiah." The whole of this Section is transcribed below.*—Could then, the author think that the matter was sufficiently dispatched in this cavalier and superficial manner? Could he satisfy himself with leaving the impression on his readers, that this was an equitable statement of the argument which he is professing to answer? Is it "*notorious* that the ancient Jews, and indeed the Jewish nation in general, in all ages, entertained no such expectation?" Is the whole series of argument from the

* "That the Jews expected a pre-existent Messiah.—One text only is alleged with any plausibility in favour of this supposition. John vii. 27. 'We know this man whence he is; but when the Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.' Grotius and Doddridge explain this passage as alluding to the miraculous conception of Jesus. Dr. Whitby more justly understands it as referring to a tradition among the Jews, that the Messiah was to be conveyed from Bethlehem soon after his nativity, and to be concealed from the world till Elias came to anoint him. It is said that some of the modern Cabalists maintain that the angel Metatron, who led the Israelites in the wilderness, will be the soul of the Messiah. But it is notorious that the ancient Jews, and indeed the Jewish nation in general, in all ages entertained no such expectation. Trypho the Jew, in his Dialogue with Justin Martyr, early in the second century, represents the notion of the pre-existence and incarnation of Jesus, as not only wonderful, but silly: and he reproaches the Christians for their belief in the miraculous conception of Christ, which he ridicules as a fiction equally absurd with that of Jupiter and Danaë. He says, that all his nation expect the Messiah to be a man born like other men. Justin Martyr Opp. Edit. Thirlby, p. 233—6. Dr. Priestley's Hist. of Early Opinions, vol. iii. p. 40—49. Ben Mordecai's (H. Taylor's) Lett. vol. i. p. 359—61."—*Calm Inquiry*, p. 10, 11.

Jewish prophecies to be thus eluded? And, though the documents which we possess with regard to the sentiments entertained in the lower ages of the Jewish polity, be not equally direct and palpable, are they entitled to no consideration? Has not various and independent evidence been produced, that many of the ancient Jews believed that their Messiah, though yet an object of expectation as to his appearance among men, had existed before the creation, and in the possession of the highest dignities and powers?*

The passage concerning the Metatron is borrowed by Henry Taylor from Allix, who, as appears from his own references, took it at second hand. Allix, we have before remarked, is not to be depended on for either accuracy or judgment. If, however, a genuine Jewish passage to this effect had been authenticated, it would amount to very

* Dr. Priestley, in his *History of Early Opinions*, vol. iii. p. 1—49. has indeed brought a variety of evidence to prove that the Jews, in general, since the introduction and diffusion of Christianity, have expected their Messiah to be a mere man. But certainly this may be admitted without prejudice to the opinion that, before and at the time of Jesus, a different doctrine existed among them. After the light of Christianity had arisen, Judaism became a very different thing from what it had been before. The ceremonies of the Jews were sunk into mere superstitions, their ancient doctrines were made void by the traditions and corruptions of their elders, and their whole religion degenerated into a system of vapid forms: “their minds were blinded, and even unto this day, the veil is upon their heart.” 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15.

little. But the evidence which has been adduced from the book Zohar, appears to me to be of much greater weight, and to have deserved some notice from Dr. Priestley and the author of the *Calm Inquiry*, to neither of whom Schœttgenius can have been an unknown author.

The sentiments of Trypho are justly represented. I think there is internal evidence that the Dialogue is founded on a real disputation which Justin had maintained with an adversary much more able and acute than himself. But we should take into the account, that the character of Trypho, whether real or personated, represents that of his nation after the introduction and the extensive prevalence of Christianity; when, not only were their prevailing opinions corrupted and secularized by the causes above mentioned, but they were exasperated to the last degree against the new religion, and were under strong motives to retrench every thing in their own system which might seem to countenance its claims. Their violence and mental blindness disqualified them from being unexceptionable reporters of the faith of their ancestors. For the same reason, the sentiments of the modern Jews, degraded as they are by worldliness, infidelity, and the most pitiful superstitions, are entitled to no regard.



